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ABSTRACT

The five studies reported in this journal were undertaken by classroom English teachers to encourage teachers to conduct and read educational research, and to generate curiosity about recent research in the teaching of English. Articles are (1) "Can Teachers Ignore Mechanical Errors in Composition?"; (2) "What Do Freshmen and Sophomores Like to Read?"; (3) "The Writer's Audience: What Is Its Effect on Quality of Student Composition?"; (4) "What Is the Relationship between the Amount of Reading and the Quality of Writing by Tenth Grade Boys?"; and (5) "Does Student Revision of Composition Really Pay Off?". A concluding discussion, on whether English teachers can conduct research, reviews experiments in language, composition, literature, and English teacher performance. Included is a bibliography of articles and books on research and experiments in English teaching. (JMC)

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Kenneth L. Donelson, Editor

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Preface to RESEARCH AND EXPERIMENTS IN ENGLISH TEACHING

In an ENGLISH JOURNAL article entitled "The Teacher of Secondary School English as Researcher" which appeared in February 1964, William H. Evans wrote, "The last decade has had English teachers' heads spinning with revolutions in grammar, multi-level and individualized approaches to literature, a deluge of paperbacks, team teaching, new ideas for mass media, lay reading programs, programed materials, and many other revolutions, trends, and innovations equally confusing and frightening. Research into these matters has been spotty, and results have been conflicting." Evans then noted how very important it is to involve English teachers in the pursuit of answers to curriculum trends and changes and innovations and to "mention some of the talents and opportunities for research which are most urgently needed in the teaching of secondary school English, and to show that the good secondary English teacher has them to an extent that is most promising". Finally, Evans listed some "needed" attributes of the researcher and demonstrates that English teachers are qualified.

"Needed: researchers with more creativity and imagination. . .
Needed: researchers with more curiosity about the teaching of secondary school English. . .
Needed: researchers who are not afraid to experiment with intangibles. . .
Needed: researchers who are interested in doing basic research. . .
Needed: researchers with greater freedom to do research. . .
Needed: consultants who can help locate problems, make some judgment about the significance and the validity of the subject matter to be tested, plan research, and aid in the interpretation of data. . ."

Six years later, we still have the revolution going full blast in virtually everything Evans listed, and we can add behavioral objectives, elective programs, films, computerized grading of student writing, use of tape recorders for teaching composition, and others to his list. Although the NCTE had published or disseminated several conference reports on research and English teaching in 1962-1964, it did not begin to publish its series of research reports until 1964, No. 1 being Walter Loban's THE LANGUAGE OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN. While we have a mass of research being done in English teaching, there is little evidence that classroom English teachers are involved in most of the research, and there is little evidence to suggest that classroom English teachers are able to read the mass of research currently available. That depressing lack of evidence led to this issue of the ARIZONA ENGLISH BULLETIN. The purposes of this issue are (1) to encourage English teachers to consider their discipline and to find areas of uncertainty or disagreement which demand research, hopefully research these teachers will become involved with, (2) to encourage some English teachers to read some of the mass of research in English teaching, hopefully to discover flaws in some studies, classroom applications in others, (3) to point up the values and excitement of educational research, hopefully so that some English teachers will emulate the spirit of research, and (4) to demonstrate that research is possible for English teachers, hopefully to encourage other English teachers to go and do likewise.

The five studies herein reported are not earth-shaking, but they were attempts by some teachers to find out something they did not know. None of them are particularly hard to read--no vast masses of jargon or statistics or anything that would disturb the calm of any English teacher. But each of them represents the hard work of an English teacher who admitted he did not have all the answers. The editor offers a rationale for English teacher involvement with research and proof-positive that English teachers can do research to open and end the five studies.

SHOULD ENGLISH TEACHERS BE EXPECTED TO READ AND CONDUCT RESEARCH?

In the November 10, 1969, issue of COMMENT (the newsletter for the Colorado Language Arts Society) Don Gallo surveyed 134 English teachers in 5 junior high schools and 5 senior high schools in Denver to discover "how much the average English teacher knows about recent research results, how he knows what he knows, why he doesn't know as much as it would be worth knowing, and what suggestions he might make to help researchers keep him better informed". In attempting to answer the question, "Does research influence the classroom teacher of English?" Gallo found that of the 66 English teachers who answered, only one-half felt they were fairly well informed about recent research in teaching English. Gallo added, "But they weren't," and pointed out that

(1) "Most of the respondents failed to differentiate between a research publication and a descriptive article in the ENGLISH JOURNAL or a chapter in a good methods text. If the idea sounded good, they bought it; whether it was based on solid research evidence didn't seem to matter to most teachers."

(2) "But when it came to specific pieces of research in teaching English, only a small number of teachers knew much. Of the ten concise, readable, recent, and useful Research Reports published by the NCTE, only six teachers had read Squire's THE RESPONSE OF ADOLESCENTS WHILE READING FOUR SHORT STORIES. A total of 14 had no idea what the results of that study were, and the remaining 46 admitted that they had never even heard of that study (which was published in 1964). Only eight teachers were familiar with the contents of Bateman and Zidonis' THE EFFECT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL GRAMMAR ON THE WRITING OF NINTH AND TENTH GRADERS."

Why is it that English teachers know so little of research findings and knowing so little either do no research of their own or do research without knowing of related prior studies? Perhaps their reluctance to read research (and the consequent lack of application of research supported findings to the classroom) stems from fear or lack of understanding or lack of training. That word, "research," often brings stultifying memories of jargon (we do not use jargon in English teaching, after all), mathematics (and aren't English teachers supposed to be afraid of numbers?), tests (which do not fit into the humanistic tradition), and Greek letters (why can't they say what they mean without all that mumbo-jumbo?), all apparently pointless and impenetrable to English teachers.

But simply put, research is the handmaiden of any man who thinks, for a thinking man questions, and questions asked must ultimately be answered as best man can find ways to find some answers. Whether the research be about theories of the creation of the earth or causes of cancer or methods of providing adequate food for the earth's booming population (and these and more are in WHY MAN CREATES, a film every English teacher should see and use in his classes) or the value of teaching semantics to avoid ambiguities in writing or the value of diagraming as an aid in teaching sentence structure or the comparative values of free reading versus common reading in teaching understanding of a literary process or the value of the elective system of courses in high school or the value of grammar (of whatever kind) in teaching composition (and all of these ought to be of some interest to English teachers) is less important than that it represents some thinking man trying to find some answers. If the inductive or inquiry method of teaching makes any sense, it is in its wish to provoke students to begin to ask questions that are worth something to him and then to begin looking for some answers. Teachers using the inductive method and urging the students to inquire and seek answers are particularly open to the charge of hypocrisy if they do not search for questions and answers themselves.

There are at least two reasons why the English teacher should know techniques of research--(1) to conduct research, and (2) to read research.

But is it really worth the time and trouble for the classroom English teacher to conduct research? Isn't it true that a long period of training and vast amounts of time and money are needed to do any research? Perhaps there is some truth that training is needed (although many people have trained themselves to read linguistics and literary criticism and rhetoric without any formal college training) and time and money help (though most English teachers find time to do what they think is important and money is not that important for a small scale investigation, though money is rather nice for almost any human activity). But what is even truer is that any English teacher who doesn't have a reasonably intelligent answer to a question is misguided at best (and foolish at the worst) if he casually wonders why someone hasn't researched this and then lets it go at that. Any English teacher is ripe for research (whether or not he's qualified) when he wants to find an answer to a question, whether it's "What's the value of free reading for my students?" or "Does tracking of students really make them learn better?" or "Is Fiedler's idea of the red man versus paleface really valid for modern American literature?" or "What would students gain from seeing short art-films in my classes?" or "Would using Brooks and Warren's ideas of rhetoric help my college bound seniors?" or "Would a study of Christensen's rhetoric of the sentence and the paragraph improve student writing?" If he really does not know (and most teachers never admit they don't know--they use something and then "feel" that it helped the students) and he wants to find out, then he must decide as exactly as possible what he wants to know (removing ambiguities from his terminology which any English teacher is supposedly qualified to do) and determine what is the shortest and least expensive way he can find some intellectually defensible answers. In this search, he goes through what amounts to research, determining what he wants to do (hypothesis or statement of problem), determining what is the most feasible way of doing it (research design), running the experiment (data collection), asking what all this data means (analysis), and determining in view of the experiment what he knows and does not know (conclusions and recommendations for further research).

And what are some of the things English teachers do not know (and these have been little investigated by anyone or they have produced contradictory findings proving a need for further study)? A whole universe of areas are subsumed under such statements as "every English teacher knows that ____" the blank to be filled with things like "grammar is essential to get into college," "diagraming will help students write better," "the chronological method of teaching literature is inherently more logical than any other method," "spelling lists are essential if students are to learn to spell," "thematic units won't work with students above the eighth grade," "outlining writing leads to better organized writing," etc. Do we really know these things? What kind of proof do we have? When was the proof offered? Did the researcher have a large enough sample to generalize? Has the proof ever been questioned or refuted? Or is it true, and it is too often, that there is little or no proof, only collective intuition at work. If something seems obvious or is commonly assumed, reflect that it was once commonly assumed and obvious that the world was flat or that recitation was the way to teach any subject or that beating a child would make him learn or that learning names and dates would make a student understand and appreciate literature. How many of these questions below have been researched? How many readers have tried to find answers?

1. Will the study of semantics help students to understand and apply some specific reading skills to poetry? Will the study of semantics help students to write more specifically and concretely?

2. Will the study of grammar (traditional, structural, transformational, tagmemic, or stratificational) help students to handle one or more skills in writing? What skills? What phases of what grammar(s)?
3. Will students understand and enjoy books more through free reading (individualized reading) than through common reading? Is the value of free reading for understanding and enjoyment limited to longer works, or will it work with shorter works (stories, poems, essays)?
4. Does "tracking" students in English classes provide for individualized teaching? What proof do we have that "tracking" provides better education for students (what students?)? Do all "tracks" benefit equally?
5. Other than as legalized blackmail, what proof do we have that grading (no matter what method) does any good? Would learning in the English class decrease if grading were eliminated?
6. What kinds of learning are essential in the English class to train students for college or their jobs? What kinds of learning are essential in the English class beyond vocational or college-entrance requirements?
7. What do college and university English professors really want high school English teachers to teach? What do high school English teachers really want junior high school English teachers to teach? How important are the requests or demands of those teaching one level above the individual teacher? How much should the individual teacher predicate his teaching on what others hope he will teach in his English classes?
8. Does the inductive method of teaching the sociology of the language (usage) lead to greater understanding than the deductive method?
9. Will an introductory course in elementary logic lead to more effective organization (or reasoning) in written composition?
10. What kinds of criticism or evaluation of written composition would be most effective with what students?
11. What is the literary worth of material written for the adolescent? What kinds of criticism (archetypal, formalistic, Aristotelian, generic, sociological, psychological) would be most wisely used?
12. What approaches would be best to teach various kinds of writing? Would films (like MOODS OF SURFING, DREAM OF WILD HORSES, THE STRINGBEAN, WHY MAN CREATES, BOILED EGG, LONELY BOY, THE ADVENTURES OF AN *, CARNIVAL) aid in teaching the process of communication, written or oral?
13. What are the major needs of Arizona English teachers (in their first year of teaching, and after a few years of experience)?
14. What leads to student fear of writing?
15. What happens in English classes (if anything) that contributes to (or deters from) the dropout problem in high schools? What kinds of training or experiences would in part alleviate the dropout problem?

All of the above questions are too broad and the wording is perhaps fuzzy or ambiguous, but each is worth consideration and each could serve as an experiment for any English department. But each demands some answers, albeit tentative, based on something better than "Students do seem to learn from it," or "I'm excited about it and the kids seem to be," or "It seems to work better than (or as well as) what we have used," or "Kids will thank me someday for all I'm doing for them," or "We've always done it this way," or "It's good for students," or "You can't get into college without it," or "This is part of our cultural heritage," or "You can't get a job without it." All these answers are invalid and intellectually indefensible without some sort of supporting evidence, yet each like the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.

But even if the English teacher feels that he has neither time nor ability nor inclination to conduct research, he is on shaky ground indeed if he does not keep up-to-date on the research other people do. Perhaps one reason the professions of law and medicine are respected is that the good lawyer or doctor keeps informed on what is going on in research. Teachers who do not know what is being done and who is doing it in research simply have lost touch with basic information they must know. Not being aware of recent research means the English teacher is unaware of findings in rhetoric or linguistics or lexicography or dialectology or literature that could give him insight into teaching problems he faces daily or into "lies" he has inadvertently been teaching as the revealed word for some years or into ideas for new approaches to teaching English.

Don Gallo, in the article cited earlier, notes 4 reasons why most English teachers don't know enough about research.

"(1) formal research findings are almost meaningless to the average classroom teacher because they contain lengthy descriptions of research design, too many statistics, too much educational jargon, and they are uninspiring reading;
(2) the results are only a small segment of any research report, and they are often obscured in a lot of technical terminology;
(3) formal research does not usually emphasize how the results can be easily incorporated into daily practice for the typical (or untypical) teacher;
(4) there are too many other things for teachers to do besides read research."

Gallo then noted that "what we all need is something brief, readable, excitingly-written, without statistics, and with specific suggestions of exactly how the results might best be used in almost any classroom the next day".

Gallo's last point is worth considering in any methods course or professional publication (though Tony Tovatt's column, "This World of English," appears monthly in the ENGLISH JOURNAL and tries to do something like this), and point 4 above, the problem of time, is valid, though English teachers, like anyone else, usually find adequate time to do what they think good and necessary. But the first 3 points above seem less convincing, almost rationalizations for English teacher ignorance. Any attempt at communicating ideas or information or research is based on some sort of language, and of course the reader trying to get the idea or information or research must know the language. But reading Moliere in the original demands ability to read French, reading Frye's ANATOMY OF CRITICISM assumes a background in literary criticism and some awareness of other critics, reading Shakespeare with any intelligence demands awareness of the language of Elizabethan English, and reading anything in modern rhetoric assumes some background in ancient and renaissance rhetoric. And English teachers seem able and willing to pick up some other language, if the results seem worth the time and effort. Yet why is it that an English teacher will modestly brag about his willingness to spend time on a study of literary criticism (whether it be Frye or Brooks and Warren or Krieger or Booth or others) or rhetoric (whether that of Aristotle or Campbell or Christensen or what have you) and see no value in learning anything about educational research (and usually demean it in the process of any discussion). Admittedly, the man who spouts "Research says. . ." at frequent intervals is a bore, no more or less than the man who says "Frye says. . ." or "Plato says. . ." or "Shakespeare says. . ."

Of course, research reports contain lengthy descriptions of research design, statistics, and jargon. Research designs offer the intelligent reader proof that the research was carried out carefully and intelligently or allow him to spot holes in the design. Statistics are part of the language (and both a large and important part) of research which forces the researcher to be methodical and accurate; statistics do not have to be dull or unimaginative, though they sometimes are, as the English language is sometimes used in a dull or unimaginative way. Jargon there may be in research, but every language can be accused by the unsympathetic or unknowing of being jargon, and any profession or human activity has its jargon. That research is frequently uninspiring reading is hardly earthshaking news; much of what man writes outside research is uninspiring. What is uninspiring is that research is accused of being that by people who cannot and/or will not read it. The results are indeed a small part of the reported research, mostly because any investigator worthy of the name knows that the results count for little if he does not indicate how he found these results. Technical terminology is yet another word for jargon or research language, proof only that the English teacher cannot read research. Finally, research more often than not does not indicate how the findings or conclusions or results can be applied to daily teaching, but a careful and intelligent and knowledgeable reader ought to be able to figure things out for himself. Gallo's comment that such research findings ought to be summarized briefly for teachers is attractive, but such summaries would depend entirely upon the ability of the summarizer to understand the original research and determine what needs to be told the reader and to understand the possible classroom implications and applications and to inform the reader of those. Every English teacher is aware how very differently people (even intelligent and sympathetic people) understand the ideas or applications underlying any complex human utterance. Of course it seems pleasing and time-saving to be told what research means, in effect to be told how to pretend we have read research, but skipping the question of intellectual dishonesty, how can we know whether the popularizer or summarizer told us all we need to know, told us all the qualifications or reservations the researcher tried to make clear, or told us how this piece of research fits into a series of attempts to discover some answers. The reader of Aristotle's RHETORIC who cannot read the original Greek can compare many different translations (Lane Cooper, W. Rhys Roberts, John H. Freese, J.E.C. Weldon) and thus find some reasonably intelligent middle ground for an ambiguity or arguable point, but if he cannot read research, where will he find many different and detailed accounts of the same piece of research? And any attempt at translating the original research, though aimed at the simple, can deviate into the simplistic. Translations of the ideas of John Dewey have often distorted his genius, and the translation of Christian principles by the Salem witch-hunters hardly did justice to the original.

While an understanding of statistics is not something toward which many teachers gravitate, no group seems prone to fear statistics more than English teachers. And this fear, perhaps based on fear of numbers or the unknown or the unknowable, frightens many English teachers from making any effort to read research. But statistics can be understood, through study and through reading research. The sole journal devoted to educational research about English teaching, the NCTE's RESEARCH IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH, is worth any English teacher's time, yet a cursory glance through the first two issues of Volume I (1967-1968) reveal the presence of such terms as "experimental design, independent and dependent variables, mean, standard deviation, correlation, hypotheses, t-test, multiple correlation, factorial design, analysis of variance, stratified research sampling, reliability coefficient, histogram, frequency distribution, phi correlation coefficient, degrees of freedom, sum of squares, and mean squares". That these are foreign to most English teachers is unquestionably true. That they are beyond English teachers who learn and understand and use terms like "objective correlative, iambus, tetrameter, verisimilitude, point of view, kernel sentences, generative rhetoric, hamartia, deus ex machina, epiphany, metaphysical conceit, the pathetic fallacy, closet drama, scansion, inventio, stylistics, or quatrain" seems wholly beyond belief. Ignorant of statistical manipulation of figures, the English teacher may argue, "Well, you can't trust figures anyway". But "you" can't trust anything "you" don't understand, and a knowledge of statistics would help teachers read research, and it would certainly eliminate a reverence for the "normal" curve (there are an infinity of such curves) or acceptance of correlation as evidence in and of itself (any correlation is dependent upon the data and may be open to question if the data or collecting techniques are suspect or badly handled) or the equating of two pieces of research (that's like saying two poems are alike or equally good since they're both poems). Such books as Good's INTRODUCTION TO EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH, Rummell's AN INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH PROCEDURES IN EDUCATION, or Hillway's INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH would give the English teacher an overview of research techniques and philosophy, and books like Tate's STATISTICS IN EDUCATION, Guilford's FUNDAMENTAL STATISTICS IN PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION, or Blommers and Lindquist's ELEMENTARY STATISTICAL METHODS IN PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION would give the English teacher some basic understandings of the rationales and methods for using statistics. A very funny book on statistics which makes amusing reading at the same time it gives the reader some basic ideas about statistics is Darrell Huff's HOW TO LIE WITH STATISTICS.

Unfortunately, English teachers have never been particularly avid readers of the research done in English teaching. It may be of genuine value for each of us to learn how to construct the wheel, for wheels differ, and each man deserves the freedom to build his own wheel as he sees it. But it is of no apparent value to build a wheel already devised or to needlessly imitate plans for a wheel when neither plans nor wheel worked before. English teachers who wonder why someone doesn't devise a rating scale for grading composition betray their ignorance of the "composition scale" movement from 1910 to 1925 which seemed so promising and yet proved so deadend (read Earl Hudelson's ENGLISH COMPOSITION: ITS AIMS, METHODS, AND MEASUREMENTS, 23rd Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Bloomington, Illinois: 1923, for background), who wonder what, if any, relationship there is between a knowledge of traditional grammar and writing ability betray their ignorance of all the studies from 1900 on (note the comments and bibliography in Ingrid Strom's "Research in Grammar and Usage and Its Implications for Teaching Writing," BULLETIN OF THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, INDIANA UNIVERSITY, September 1960), or who wonder about the reading interests of young people betray their ignorance of the hundreds of reading interest studies already run (see George Norvell's THE READING INTEREST OF YOUNG PEOPLE, Boston: 1950). It is certainly not true that any of these pieces of research are perfect, but they are all there for the reading, and they deserve study and thought. If they have not provided the answers, they should be known so future researchers will not retrace ground already covered, or if they do wish to retrace ground, researchers will be looking for new things or they will try a new way of covering the old ground. That the many studies from 1900 on demonstrating the lack of relationship between grammar and composition betray many questionable qualities and demonstrate questionable statistical procedures may be true, but any investigator of the relationship between structural or traditional or transformational grammar and composition ought to be aware of what has been done. So should teachers of English at large. Recently, an attack on Harper and Row's NEW DIRECTIONS IN ENGLISH led to a statement by Maricopa County School Superintendent Richard L. Harris that "hundreds of years of formal grammar have been used to develop some of the world's finest literature. It is buried in NEW DIRECTIONS under a pile of sociology in the name of English". A few days later, the PHOENIX GAZETTE (March 23, 1970, p. 6) approvingly quoted the comment about the relationship between grammar (how many hundreds of years have we had formal grammar of any kind?) and literature, a point any English teacher who knew his research should have been able to challenge. How many were prepared?

A couple of months ago, a graduate student turned in a piece of research with this comment, copied exactly: "I am hardly what one could or would call a sentimentalist, however if as Dr. Weingartner suggests, we are going to write ourselves right out of space and the printed word is not the media, why should teachers publish. There job is a service. Let the scholars run the studies."

So why should English teachers conduct research or read research? Because English teachers are anxious to try new ideas in their teaching--elective systems, use of rhetoric, transformational grammar, archetypal criticism, behavioral objectives, use of films, or creative dramatics--and they had better have demonstrable evidence to support their inevitable contentions that the new should (or should not) replace the old. When the implementation of the new calls for no funds, then it is simply academically and intellectually indefensible not to have some proof, and that is the teacher's problem, no one else's. But when implementation of materials or techniques costs money, then the already budget-pressed school administrator has every right to ask, "What makes you think it will work?" or "How will you know it does anything better than the way you're teaching now?" That's a pretty good reason to know how to conduct and read research.

CAN TEACHERS IGNORE MECHANICAL ERRORS IN COMPOSITION?

Karla Kay Rodgers, Former Fellow, PrTFP in Teaching English
to the Disadvantaged, ASU

> "I assign each student theme two grades -- one for content, and one for mechanics."
>
> "I think content far outweighs mechanics, and I grade my students' papers accordingly. I mark mechanical errors on their papers, but the grade is based solely on the content."
>
> "I refuse to grade any paper until the mechanical errors are corrected. I can't be bothered trying to decipher the language if I'm to concentrate on the logic and coherence of a theme."

The content-mechanics debate is an old one among composition teachers. Which is more important? Is it more realistic to assign one comprehensive grade, or more helpful to give a split-grade (i.e., one for content and one for mechanics)?

Some English teachers admit they're not all sure; others adamantly defend one position or the other.

But perhaps we have neglected to ask a rather pertinent question: Can we separate the two? Can we read a paper and evaluate content without being influenced by its mechanical superiority or inferiority? And, if we answer that it is indeed possible, how does our performance measure up to the assertion?

These are the questions which this small-scale study attempts to investigate.

Each theme used in the study was written by a valley high school sophomore, in-class (no opportunity for revision or re-writing after the end of the one regular 50-minute class period). The students were allowed to write on any topic of their choice.

The six themes composing "Set 1" were not altered in any way, except that each was typed so as to avoid any difficulties in deciphering handwriting.

Eleven different themes were selected for use as "Set 2". These themes were also typed. However, two versions of each theme were reproduced--one version ("Set 2 As Is") with spelling errors, run-on sentences, sentence fragments, and other mechanical errors; and a second version ("Set 2 Corrected") in which all (or most) mechanical errors were removed or corrected. No alteration of content took place. The directions for both versions of Set 2 were identical--in short, to ignore mechanics completely and to grade only on the basis of content.

The twenty-one participants in the study were chosen from the immediate valley area. All have high school teaching experience; the average was 7.8 years (with a range from 2 to 19 years). Eighteen are presently teaching high school; one is now teaching at the junior college level; one at a technical college; two at the university level.

No more than one participant was selected from a particular institution so as to lessen the probability of chance comparison of the materials between participants.

Eleven of the twenty-one participants were male, and ten were female.

The first step was to distribute to the participants the six themes composing Set 1.

The directions for Set 1 requested each participant to evaluate each theme as he normally would and to assign one letter grade for each theme. Raters were free to use "+" or "-" grades if they chose, but were requested not to assign "split" grades (one for content, one for mechanics) simply because of the difficulties in comparison and analysis which would arise.

All but one of the 21 participants completed this first step of the study. This one exception (presently teaching high school) wrote, "I am much too busy to decipher these themes. I' [sic] appears to me that the teacher who supervised the writing of these themes should be graded. Sorry". It may be interesting to some readers that on the one theme this rater did "evaluate" before giving up in obvious disgust, making 27 marks (e.g. circling, underlining, slashes, etc.) and 10 written comments, he assigned a grade of "F-". All but 3 of the total 37 marks and comments were directed at mechanics. Not one could possibly be interpreted as encouraging or positive.

The remaining 20 raters' grades for the six themes were then analyzed according to rank order correlation.

Rank order correlation is an elementary statistical device used to determine the relationship or degree of agreement between two or more raters as to rank order each has assigned to the themes in question. For example, both Rater X and Rater Y may have judged Theme #38 as the best of the lot, although Rater X assigned that paper an "A" while Rater Y gave it a "C". It is the *rank*, then, with which we are concerned, not the letter grade per se. A rank order correlation (r_{ro}) of 1.0 indicates complete agreement between two raters; a r_{ro} of -1.0 would indicate total *disagreement* between two raters as to rank order. A r_{ro} of .60 or above is for most purposes considered to be a fairly high correlation or degree of agreement. One point to remember is that whatever the r_{ro} of two raters, this correlation gives no clue as to *why* the two raters agree or disagree.

By using the computed rank order correlations, the 20 participants were grouped into pairs having the closest possible over-all agreement in ranking those six themes of Set 1. For example, the ranking of participant A was compared with participant B, C, D, etc. with the following correlations.

TABLE 1

AB (.20)
AC (.05)
AD (.25)
AE (.40)
AF (.25)
AG (.05)
AH (.00)

AI (.85)
AJ (.40)
AK (.05)
AL (.20)
AM (.20)
AN (-.63)
AO (.80)

AP (.80)
AQ (.70)
AR (.45)
AS (.65)
AT (.70)

Similarly, participant B was compared with participant C, D, E, etc. until every participant's rankings had been correlated with every other participant's rankings. The final pairings and the rank order correlations of the various pairs were as follows:

TABLE 2

Rater Pairs	Rank Order Correlations of Set 1
A I	.85
C K	.89
E H	.86
F L	.56
M R	.76
G N	.65
O P	.87
D Q	.57
B T	.91
J S	.97

Having then established these pairs, Sets 2 were sent out to the remaining 20 participants. Within each pair, one rater received a "Set 2 As Is" and the other received a "Set 2 Corrected". However, direction sheets for both versions of Set 2 were identical. These directions were similar to those for Set 1 EXCEPT that the raters were asked to ignore mechanics completely and to grade on content only. Since the only difference between the two versions of Set 2 was the presence or absence of mechanical errors, all raters were evaluating the same content.

After all Sets 2 were returned, rank order correlations were again computed.

Because of reader variability, one would not expect each pair of raters to maintain exactly the same r_{ro} on Set 2 as on Set 1. However, if the raters were in fact able to grade on content to the exclusion of mechanics, the over-all picture should be similar on both Sets 1 and 2.

This was dramatically not the case!

Table 3 shows the results of this analysis. Each pair of raters is listed along with their rank order correlations on Sets 1 and 2. Also, the version of Set 2 received by each rater is indicated, to preclude inadvertently comparing the correlations for two raters who had actually received the same version.

TABLE 3

Rater Pairs Used			
Set 2 Corrected	Set 2 As Is	r_{ro} Set 1	r_{ro} Set 2
A	I	.85	.28
B	T	.91	--
C	K	.89	.18
D	Q	.57	--
E	H	.86	.43
F	L	.56	.25
G	N	.65	-.09
J	S	.97	.71
M	R	.76	.28
O	P	.87	.07

Non-Pairs

Set 2 Corrected	Set 2 As Is	r_{ro} Set 1	r_{ro} Set 2
A	P	.80	-.16
C	G	.84	.42
J	I	.84	.53
O	G	.89	.02
J	K	.96	.14

Note the Pairs B:T and D:Q show no correlation for Set 2. The reason is that one rater of each of these pairs did not, for some reason, assign grades to the themes of Set 2.

As previously stated, a correlation of .60 is considered to be an indication of a fair degree of agreement between two raters. This would eliminate Pair D:Q anyway, since their r_{ro} on Set 1 was only .57. On these grounds, Pair F:L with a r_{ro} of only .56 should also be disregarded. The next lowest r_{ro} is .65 and then .76; all others are .85 or better.

Since the above considerations narrowed the number of valid established pairs to only seven, the statistics for five other pair-groupings are included under the heading "Non-Pairs" at the bottom of Table 3. These are pairs of raters with high correlations on Set 1 (at least .80 or better) and who in fact received different versions of Set 2; in short, these are all possible and valid pairs whose statistics are significant.

Out of the 12 total possible pair-groupings, then, only ONE pair maintained a r_{ro} indicating a high degree of agreement--Pair J:S with a r_{ro} of .97 on Set 1, and .71 on Set 2.

In other words, 11 out of 12 pairs of raters with an average of 7.8 years of high school experience who achieved a high degree of agreement as to the rank order of student themes (as indicated by a r_{ro} of .65 or better) no longer demonstrated any such agreement when one-half graded themes with many mechanical errors and the other half of the raters graded the same themes with the mechanical errors corrected, even though all were supposedly grading on content only.

There are a couple of observations which statistically can't be given much weight (if any), but which some may find thought-provoking.

Of the raters evaluating Set 2, fully half of those raters made no written comments whatsoever. Of these raters, all but one had made marks and comments on Set 1. (The usual was a page covered with markings for mechanics, with one or two written comments regarding content.) One can only guess why. Did these raters find it more difficult to evaluate content and therefore wished to avoid any commitment? Did they feel comments regarding content were somehow less necessary? Or were they perhaps just tired of grading papers for someone else?

Of those raters who received "Set 2 As Is", a third of them evidently couldn't resist marking and criticizing the mechanical errors, even though the directions advised to please ignore mechanics completely. Merely force of habit? And if the "habit" were that strong, were they able to disregard mechanics when it came to the grade assigned? How convinced would the student writer have been that his paper had been evaluated on content only when the paper was covered with corrections of mechanics?

This study was done on much too small a scale and with too few controls to warrant any definitive conclusion that teachers can or cannot evaluate the content of a student theme without being swayed by the mechanics.

Nevertheless, it certainly can be said to raise serious question as to teachers' ability to do so and at least indicates that the question deserves further, more extensive investigation.

If the vast differences between the degree of agreement on Sets 1 and 2 is due to the presence or absence of mechanical errors, then what? Should teachers resign themselves to grammatical exercises and disregard content until the battle of the missing comma and the run-on sentence is won? Or could the awareness of the difficulty itself help many teachers to better discern between grammar and logic, between punctuation and the clarity of a thought? Could an aware teacher use her experience to present the situation more graphically to her students, and might this exposure give rise to a real appreciation of the way in which garbled grammar can mask a valid argument? It would certainly be worth finding out!

WHAT DO FRESHMEN AND SOPHOMORES LIKE TO READ?

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Probably few high school students ever read SILAS MARNER as an English class assignment and enjoyed it. Although many English teachers personally dislike the novel, they apparently feel that it would be un-American or blasphemous not to teach it, and SILAS MARNER remains one of the most frequently used "class novels," probably because it is one of the most widely anthologized.

This contradiction between what students enjoy and what they read in English class (and SILAR MARNER is only one of a set of standard books used widely in English classes) inspired us to take a survey of some of the freshman and sophomore students at Coronado High School to find out what books they enjoyed reading. As we expected, SILAS MARNER wasn't mentioned.

English classes don't need to be dull or archaic, and a survey such as this simple one can help a teacher make his class more interesting and relevant to the students' lives. A compilation of books actually read and enjoyed by classmates inevitably produces a more positive feeling in students than would the usual list of "worthwhile books to read". And it would certainly help an English teacher see at what level of difficulty his students are reading. If, for example, Mr. Smith decides to teach Howard Fast's APRIL MORNING as a class novel and discovers through this kind of survey that his class is reading books like CRIME AND PUNISHMENT and LIGHT IN AUGUST and FAREWELL TO ARMS or A SEPARATE PEACE or LORD OF THE FLIES, a change of plans may be in order.

Surveys like this are not new; English teachers for years have been interested in finding out the actual enjoyment reading their students have been doing. In 1950, George Norvell, State Supervisor of English Teaching in New York State, published what proved to be a most detailed and exhaustive study (READING INTERESTS OF YOUNG PEOPLE, Boston: Heath), and a few years later followed this with other comments (WHAT BOYS AND GIRLS LIKE TO READ, Morristown, N.J.: Silver Burdett, 1958), but many other teachers have also written about reading interest surveys. A brief bibliography concludes this article.

Although these surveys are worth consulting, their findings may sometimes be open to question and the books they cite rapidly go out-of-date. To be more effective, such surveys need to be taken at least every two or three years, if for no other reason than to keep up with the new books being published. And surely no one is better qualified to make such surveys or to read the results for his own good than the classroom English teacher, and surely no one will benefit more from the surveys in his own classroom teaching.

The following survey was made from 10 English classes (5 freshman, 5 sophomore) at Coronado High School in late March and early April 1970. Students were given a few minutes in class to write out titles of books they remembered reading with pleasure (or displeasure), and the lists were compiled and tabulated. It was as simple as that and it was not particularly time-consuming. Although these data are provocative, readers are warned that the data may not be 100% accurate since (1) students may not at the time have recalled all the books they might have listed, (2) some students may not have taken the survey seriously or were inaccurate in reporting titles, and (3) the books reported by 10 classes at Coronado High School are not necessarily true of other schools. But a general picture of student reading tastes is revealed and that should be valuable in setting up a literature program for these students. Numbers preceding titles indicate the number of students reporting the book. Books preceded by no numbers indicate that these titles were listed only once.

BOOKS LIKED BY FRESHMEN

19---MR. AND MRS. BO JO JONES
15---THE OUTSIDERS
12---THE PEARL
10---JOY IN THE MORNING
8---TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD
7---GONE WITH THE WIND
5---I NEVER PROMISED YOU A ROSE GARDEN
5---HOBBIT
5---BLACK LIKE ME
5---CALL OF THE WILD
4---APRIL MORNING
4---UP THE DOWN STAIRCASE
4---LORD OF THE FLIES
4---THE STERILE CUCKOO
4---TALE OF TWO TOWERS
4---FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON
4---TUNED OUT
3---MY SHADOW RAN FAST
3---ACROSS FIVE APRILS
3---GOOD TIMES, BAD TIMES
3---THE PRESIDENT'S PLANE IS MISSING
3---TO SIR WITH LOVE
3---ANIMAL FARM
3---HOT ROD
2---SEVEN DAYS IN MAY
2---WHO GETS THE DRUMSTICK
2---THE BAD SEED
2---SHANE
2---NIGGER
2---RETURN OF THE KING
2---A PATCH OF BLUE
2---COFFEE, TEA OR ME
2---CHRISTY
2---SEVENTEENTH SUMMER
2---DURANGO STREET
2---BLACK BOY
2---TRUE GRIT
2---FANTASTIC VOYAGE
2---WHITE FANG
2---WEST SIDE STORY
2---IN COLD BLOOD
2---SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON
2---GRADUATE
2---WHEN MICHAEL CALLS
2---THE CURSE OF STILL VALLEY
2---ALMOST APRIL
2---AIRPORT
2---LIGHT IN THE FOREST
2--ANNE FRANK
2--A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN
2---HELEN KELLER
2---QUEENS CONFESSION
2---DEATH COMMITTEE
2---KON TIKI
2---TOM SAWYER
FALSE COLORS
MY BROTHER'S KEEPER
SOMETHING FOOLISH, SOMETHING GAY
TO HELL AND BACK
THE YEARLING
KATHERINE
THE UNSUSPECTED
THE KING IS DEAD
TIME MACHINE
RING OF BRIGHT WATER
TRAVELS WITH CHARLIE
TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH
FROM THE EARTH TO THE MOON
DRAG STRIP
NEVER GET PERSONAL WITH A CHICKEN
THE FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
FLYING SAUCERS
DRAG RACING
BUILDING A HOT ROD
WILDERNESS CHAMPION
THE NAKED APE
UPTIGHT
TELL ME YOU LOVE ME, JUNIE MOON
DEATH IN THE FAMILY
MIDNIGHT COWBOY
FRIDAY THE RABBI SLEPT LATE
THE GIFT SHOP
HUMAN COMEDY
BEFORE I KILL MORE
THE GABRIEL HOUNDS
THE LORD OF THE RINGS
SORRY, WRONG NUMBER
THE EMPTY SPOON
OLD YELLER
THE JUNKIE PRIEST
ROOKIES OF THE NFL
GO UP FOR GLORY
SANDY KOUFAX
ONE OF OUR H-BOMBS IS MISSING
DAYBREAK
SEARCH FOR THE TRUTH

FUNERALS ARE FATAL
BUT DADDY
PORTRAIT OF A DRIVER
AT THE WHEEL
DAWN'S EARLY LIGHT
ICE STATION ZEBRA
PRACTICALLY 17
THE FAMILY NOBODY WANTED
NEW PEOPLE
2001 SPACE ODYSSEY
BOSTON STRANGLER
WHERE LOVE BEGINS
THE HIGHEST DREAM
THE BALLOON MAN
GUNS OF NAVARRONE
WHERE EAGLES DARE
NEXT TO VALOUR
WATCH ON THE WALL
H.M.S. ULYSSES
FEAR IS THE KEY
I, THE KING
CAPTAIN NEWMAN, M.D.
THE THREE MUSKETEERS
THE PUSHCART WAR
INTO THE VALLEY
YOUNG
THE SLAVES OF LOMOORE
HALESTORM MANOR
PLANET OF THE APES
BACK HOME AT THE ORGY
CRIMSON ROSES
WAR OF WORLDS
THE BEATLES
THE SURVIVORS
EAST OF EDEN
RED PONY
CAPTAIN BLOOD
GOODBYE COLUMBUS
VALLEY OF THE DOLLS
IT'S ALL IN THE STARS
ECSTASY AND ME
ROSEMARY'S BABY
WINTERWOOD
PARKWATER
REBECCA
BLUEBERRY SUMMER
THE TRAPP FAMILY SINGERS
THE YOUNG TREASURE HUNTER
INDIAN OCEAN ADVENTURE
MRS. MIKE
FARAWAY LURS
SPARROW LAKE
GREEN MANSIONS
THE MOUSE THAT ROARED
DEATH OF A HIPPIE
ROMEO AND JULIET
THE REIVERS
APACHE
THE CIVIL WAR
STORY OF SHAKESPEARE
THERE MUST BE A PONY
DELIVER US FROM EVIL
FELLOWSHIP OF THE RINGS
DON'T QUOTE ME
CAN'T WAIT TIL TOMORROW; CAUSE I GET BETTER LOOKING EVERY DAY
THE ETERNAL SAVAGE
MOONRAKER
MURDERER'S ROW
NOBODY LOVES A DRUNKEN INDIAN
FAILSAFE
CHILDHOOD'S END
BLACK STALLION
BLACK MECA
BRIDE OF MOAT HILL
WINE OF VENGEANCE
GOING ON SIXTEEN
YELLOW EYES
CHARLEY
HIGHEST DREAM
HELL'S ANGELS
HENRY AND RIBSY
LAST SUMMER
ANGEL ON SKIS
BOY NEXT DOOR
RUN WILD RUN FREE
SEPTEMBER TO JUNE
HOTEL
WUTHERING HEIGHTS
AUTO MECHANICS
ON THE BEACH
DRUGS AND THEIR USE
STRANGE FATE
PEYTON PLACE
WILT CHAMBERLAIN
CHARRO
ANYTHING FOR A FRIEND
WOMAN WHO WOULD NOT DIE
SCREAMING SHADOW
MOUNTAIN LAUREL
THE DAUGHTERS
SHADOW RIVER
BY THE PRICKING OF MY THUMBS
SCARLET LETTER
TO CATCH AN ANGEL
HAUNT LADY
MYSTERY OF THE HAUNTED MINE
DOWN THESE MEAN STREETS
FOUNTAINHEAD
MANCHILD IN THE PROMISED LAND

LILIES OF THE FIELD
THE HEART IS A LONELY HUNTER
PHAROAH'S DAUGHTER
DAY MUST DAWN
REGENCY BUCK
THE ROLLING YEARS
AFTER WORLDS COLLIDE
BLACK BEAUTY
LAD, A DOG
DESIREE
THE GUEST OF THE SHIEK
GO DOWN DEAD
LOTS OF LOVE LUCINDA
COULDN'T SMOKE THE GRASS ON MY FATHER'S LAWN
HAWAII
GAILY GAILY
ARABELLA
COTILLION
TO CATCH A SPY
DAVID COPPERFIELD
SO LOVE RETURNS
AGATHA CHRISTY
THE EXECUTIONER
SCARLET SAIL
THE ROBE
SAVANNA
THE DIFFERENT ONE
TWELVE ANGELS FROM HELL
GIRL TROUBLE
LITTLE WOMEN
AN OLD FASHIONED GIRL
SEPARATE PEACE
DIRTY DOZEN
THE SOURCE
SILVER CHALICE
MENFREYA IN THE MORNING
CYCLOPS
INVADERS
RISE AND FALL OF ADOLF HITLER
THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES
THE UNDEFEATED
REMEMBER THE ALAMO
JOHN PAUL JONES
DAVY CROCKETT
FOOTBALL DIGEST
THE RACER
DON'T WEAR GREEN
GRAND PRIX
VON RYAN'S EXPRESS
MY SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN
TOPAZ
HIROSHIMA
TORPEDO RUN
GOD IS MY CO-PILOT

BOOKS DISLIKED BY FRESHMEN

4---THE PEARL
THE RAZOR'S EDGE
TWELVE ANGELS FROM HELL
HOUSE OF FEAR
THREE DAYS ENDED
THE BALLOON MAN
WHITE VIOLETS
ROSEMARY'S BABY
HELEN KELLER
TUNED OUT
WUTHERING HEIGHTS
A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN
A WALK WITH LOVE AND DEATH
LET MY PEOPLE GO
TALE OF TWO CITIES
MEMBER OF THE WEDDING
ON THE BEACH
SHANE
KING'S ORCHARD
THE PASTURES OF HEAVEN
THE LEATHER MERCHANT
PETER PRINCIPLE
GUNSMOKE VENGEANCE
THE MOON IS DOWN
THE SECRET OF SANTA VITTORIA
FARENHEIT 451
MADAME CURIE
BIRDMAN OF ALCATRAZ
JULIUS CAESAR
ROMEO AND JULIET
MACBETH
APRIL MORNING
JANE EYRE
LORD OF THE FLIES
THE WRONG BOX
GAUNT'S DAUGHTER
THE NEW PEOPLE
TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD
IN COLD BLOOD
MR. AND MRS. BO JO JONES

BOOKS LIKED BY SOPHOMORES

13---TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD
11---THE OUTSIDERS
8---BLACK LIKE ME
7---MR. AND MRS. BO JO JONES
6---GONE WITH THE WIND
5---IN COLD BLOOD
5---INSTANT REPLAY
4---THE BAD SEED
4---HOTEL
4---JOY IN THE MORNING
4---THIS STRANGER MY SON
4---BORN FREE
4---CALL OF THE WILD
4---TO SIR, WITH LOVE
4---BRAVE NEW WORLD
3---ICE STATION ZEBRA
3---DIARY OF ANNE FRANK
3---ILLUSTRATED MAN
3---I NEVER PROMISED YOU A ROSE GARDEN
3---1984
3---ANIMAL FARM
3---THE PEARL
3---CHRISTY
2---AIRPORT
2---MY SHADOW RAN FAST
2---A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN
2---REBECCA
2---THE STERILE CUCKOO
2---LAST SUMMER
2---DARKWATER
2---SHOES OF THE FISHERMAN
2---SEVEN ANGELS FROM HELL
2---ROMEO AND JULIET
2---THE PRESIDENT'S PLANE IS MISSING
2---UP PERISCOPE
2---WEST SIDE STORY
2---SEVEN DAYS IN MAY
2---MEMORIAL TO JFK
2---HOBBIT
2---DEATH BE NOT PROUD
2---BOOKS BY TOM DOOLEY
2---THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA
2---SOUL CITY DOWNSTAIRS
2---TURNED ON
2---TREASURE ISLAND
2---TUNED OUT
2---TOM SAWYER
2---HUCKLEBERRY FINN
JIMMY CLARK
PAPER LION
RICKENBACKER
FANTASTIC VOYAGE
THE SILKIE

THE THREAD THAT RUNS SO TRUE
THE UNIVERSE BETWEEN
TIME MACHINE
WAR OF THE WORLDS
EXODUS
ONE MORE RIVER TO CROSS
BUTCH CASSIDY
MUTINY ON THE BOUNTY
BATTLE OF BRITAIN
BERLIN WALL
BIRDMAN OF ALCATRAZ
BOSTON STRANGLER
20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA
CATCH 22
2001 SPACE ODYSSEY
DUET FOR A LIFETIME
NO HIGH GROUND
THE NAKED APE
THE UGLY AMERICAN
YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE
THE UNIVERSE AND DR. EINSTEIN
THE GREAT GAESBY
HUNTER'S GREEN
HOUSE ON THE STRAND
ROSEMARY'S BABY
CATCHER IN THE RYE
THE TALKING MOUNTAIN
NINE COACHES WAITING
DROP OUT
STUART DAVIS
COFFEE, TEA OR ME
OLD YELLER
JIM THORP
THE FAMILY NOBODY WANTED
LIFE WITH MOTHER SUPERIOR
ANDROMEDA STRAIN
CAT IN THE HAT
GREEN EGGS AND HAM
LOST HORIZON
SO LOVE RETURNS
THE RAFT
MEANING OF SUCCESS
GRAPES OF WRATH
VANISHED
JERRY KRAMER'S FAREWELL TO FOOTBALL
MY TESTIMONY
THE MOUSE THAT ROARED
THE COLDITZ STORY
ON THIN ICE
HOUDINI
FLIGHT OF THE BAT
CARTOONS OF THE YEAR
WEREWOLVES

THE PIED PIPER OF TUCSON
DAWN WIND
PAPA'S WIFE
WINTER WHEAT
HAUNTING OF HILL HOUSE
A SUMMER PLACE
GIFT OF PROPHECY
OF MICE AND MEN
SAMANTHA
IT HAPPENED IN BOSTON
CATHERINE'S TIME FOR LOVE
FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON
CONNECTION
THE MAN
NIGHT AT CAMP DAVID
THE BLUE MAX
TRIXIE BRIDON
LITTLE WOMEN
STAND BY TO START ENGINES
THE GREAT ESCAPE
SILENT SHIP, SILENT SEA
TORPEDO RUN
JANE EYRE
ADVENTURERS
CARPETBAGGERS
HELL'S ANGELS
EASY RIDER
UP THE DOWN STAIRCASE
TEN LITTLE INDIANS
HEY I'M ALIVE
SHANE
GOODBYE COLUMBUS
THE LONG PASS
TRUE GRIT
I CAN'T WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW
COWARD
THOMAS JEFFERSON
FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
MANCHILD IN THE PROMISED LAND
JOHN LENNON
THE FOUNTAINHEAD
ANTHEM
SIDDARTHA
IN THE HEAT OF THE NIGHT
THE INCIDENT
KAMA SUTRA
O CALCUTTA
A QUIET PLACE IN THE COUNTRY
MIDNIGHT COWBOY
THE GRADUATE
METAMORPHOSIS
SURRENDER
BRAVE NEW WORLD REVISITED
DR. JECKYL AND MR. HYDE

BOOKS DISLIKED BY SOPHOMORES

4---THE PEARL
2---CHRISTY
2---DIARY OF ANNE FRANK
THE MAN WHO NEVER WAS
SILVER HILL
PEYTON PLACE
MYRA BRECKINRIDGE
JULIUS CAESAR
GOODBYE MR. CHIPS
MY BROTHER MICHAEL
MAGIC CHRISTIAN
MEMORIES OF YOUNG RACHAEL
MYSELF AND I
THE HOSPITAL WAR
OF MICE AND MEN
ANTIGONE
REBECCA
DARKWATER
THE TRIAL
BLACK BEAUTY
TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD
AIRPORT
MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS
LORD OF THE FLIES
CITIZEN OF THE GALAXIE
THE YEARLING
GULLIVER'S TRAVELS
ROMEO AND JULIET
SHANE
DUET FOR A LIFETIME
GRAPES OF WRATH
THE HOBBIT
JOE NAMATH'S SPORT IN LIFE
THE GLASS BLOWERS

With all the limitations given above, the survey produced some informative data of value to English teachers. (1) Somewhere between the freshman and the sophomore year, students' reading interests mature. Sophomores generally read more mature adult books than freshmen, though there were some overlaps. (2) Some sophomores and many freshmen are still reading and enjoying juvenile literature, a literary area not as well known to English teachers as it should be. (3) Certain books are enjoyed by one sex and apparently avoided by the other, but there is some crossover and it is from these books that English teachers might select class novels--JOY IN THE MORNING, I NEVER PROMISED YOU A ROSE GARDEN, FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON, ANIMAL FARM, TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD, BRAVE NEW WORLD, THE OUTSIDERS, APRIL MORNING, etc. (4) No book is going to be universally liked, and there is no point in English teachers' pretending that they can pick such a book. (5) English teachers would be wise to teach a book in a way that it can give students some criteria for selecting future reading and then the English teachers should leave the students alone to judge their reading. Certain of the titles listed were undoubtedly present since they had been taught as classroom reading--THE PEARL, MR. AND MRS. BO JO JONES, and TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD.

For us, the survey was helpful in determining what books might be worth teaching and recommending to students. But, as noted above, the survey was made at Coronado High School, and it may or may not be valid for other schools. We would encourage other teachers to conduct surveys to determine what is (or is not) popular reading at other schools. It would be worth the time of both English teachers and their students.

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THE WRITER'S AUDIENCE: WHAT IS ITS EFFECT ON QUALITY OF STUDENT COMPOSITION?

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"I never know or can even guess what or who my audience is, or whether I have any audience; thus too naturally I adjust myself on the Devil-may-care principle," Thomas Carlyle wrote. (LETTERS OF THOMAS CARLYLE TO JOHN STUART MILL, JOHN STERLING AND ROBERT BROWNING, ed. Alexander Carlyle, London: 1923, p. 74). But Carlyle is not the only writer who has been confused about his audience. Our English composition students are usually given little choice of audiences. They know that no matter what the assignment ("Write an essay in the style of TIME Magazine") the teacher will be the real and probably the sole audience. Teachers (not TIME Magazine) give grades.

Peter Elbow, in "A Method for Teaching Writing," recommends that students be provided with real audiences by having them write for specific people (lawyers, politicians, deans) who will then be invited to come to class to explain how and why their opinions have or have not been affected by a given piece of writing. The effect actually produced in a genuine audience would then have more value for the student's writing than any teacher's comments. Mr. Elbow says, "...the student's best language skills are brought out and developed when writing is considered as words on paper designed to produce a specific effect in a specific reader". (COLLEGE ENGLISH, Nov. 1968, p. 119).

Other writers have also advised the use of specific audiences for student-written papers. Beryl M. Parrish, in "Providing an Audience for Freshman Composition," says, "...all too frequently writing for the teacher inhibits honest expression, causes students to cater to the opinions of the teacher, or results in their being blocked in expression rather than forthright". (CCCC, May 1956, p. 90). Despite this plethora of good advice, actual research into the effects of a real audience on student writing seems not to have been conducted. In their Research in Written Composition (Champaign: NCTE, 1963), Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer state the need for such a study, calling for the use of "different kinds of readers" for student themes (p. 52).

In 1968, we attempted to conduct an experiment to determine the effect of one real audience on the writing of students. In order to use a real audience whose reaction to the students' themes could be immediately seen by the students, we decided to use an audience of the students themselves. For this experiment the students in two freshman composition classes wrote four themes, two for the teacher, to be graded and commented upon as usual, and two for their classmates, to be commented upon only by them. An opaque projector was used to show the latter themes to the class, the teacher making no comments whatsoever and giving no grades on these themes. For the four themes there were two assigned topics, which allowed for some variation in content and style. One teacher-directed theme and one student-directed theme was written, using each assignment. To avoid the possibility of differences by simple improvement (or deterioration) with time, the audiences were staggered; the first and fourth themes were written for the teacher, the second and third themes for the other students. Three experienced teachers graded the themes (which had previously been paired by topic) on the basis of a general impression of each theme.

The results of this experiment were inconclusive. There seemed to be some indication that students who normally made below-average grades did somewhat better on the student-directed themes, but there were too many difficulties to allow for any definite statement of results. One major problem involved the wide variation in grades assigned to a given paper by the three raters (the rank-order correlation on the sets of themes ranged from .17 to .61). Another problem concerned the students themselves. Prior to the experiment they had had no experience with writing themes for student criticism. It is extremely difficult to convince a student the first time he writes such a theme that the teacher will not, under any circumstances, either criticize or grade the theme. In addition to these drawbacks to the experiment, the number of students involved in the experiment was only 29, others having been dropped for their failure to turn in one or more of the themes.

Despite these difficulties, the original purpose of the project still seemed to be worthwhile. This being so, and the biggest problems having been made clear, we decided to try again.

We conducted the second experiment in a manner similar to the first, with certain important exceptions. We thought that the low rank-order correlation in the first experiment could be blamed on certain causes, all of which we tried to correct in the second experiment. In the first experiment the raters had not previously graded papers together, nor had there been any discussion of what to look for in grading; in the second experiment, the graders had worked together on occasion and did meet to discuss the work before beginning. Another possible cause of the poor correlation was the pairing of themes so that a student's work was graded against his own paper rather than against those of the rest of the class. Since rank-order correlation involves the ranking of papers from best to worst, during the second experiment we graded the papers by class-sets of themes. One other grading problem was straightened out; since one grader will often grade a theme high because of its interest, another grader low because of its poor construction, we asked for two grades to be given each theme: one for interest and one for construction and organization.

Among the major differences in this experiment was our use of a larger sample, four classes instead of two, with 59 students finishing the experiment. These students wrote one student-directed theme (not graded or commented upon by the teacher) before beginning the experiment. Two different methods were used for providing the student audience. In two of the classes, the student-directed themes were all dittoed; each class took home, graded, and made comments on a "class set" of themes. This was followed by discussion of the themes in class and the return of the themes (with comments by the class members) to the students who wrote them. In the other two classes, the students exchanged themes, so that each student criticized one other person's paper rather thoroughly.

Each of the assignments given during this experiment was designed to allow a student to change his content and style (if he wished) to fit the teacher or student audience. The topic assigned for the first pair of themes was "Write a humorous essay on a subject that is usually treated with too much glum seriousness". The second topic was "Write a letter giving advice to a friend who has just written that he (or she) is becoming emotionally involved with a person of another race or is considering going to Canada to avoid the draft". We had thought that perhaps some students would write conventionally, using conventional values, when they wrote for the teacher, but not when writing for the class. Surprisingly, only a few students wrote with any obviously daring candor, perhaps because they think, as one student said, in private, "I'm pretty far-out in my thinking, but I wouldn't put it in my paper. They'd be too critical."

For grading purposes, one set of student-directed themes was stapled together and paired with another set of teacher-directed themes on the same topic. Each student was given an identification number in order to allow this pairing. Each rater would grade one entire set on interest and on construction and organization. Then, after grading the other set, he would compare the two papers by a student and write any comments on the possible reasons for differences between the papers, and any other comments he could not resist making.

Some of the problems with this grading revolved around the necessity for reading two sets of themes from four classes on the same topic. The natural human tendency (which even teachers have) to become tired took its toll in the somewhat lower grades given toward the end of the grading session. Since this experiment involved comparison of grades rather than actual letter-grading, and since one class's two sets of themes would be read and graded at approximately the same time, this tendency could have had little, if any, real effect on the results of the experiment. It had more effect on the number of grader comments, so that one pair of sets of themes which were graded near the end of the experiment received no comment from any reader.

The rank-order correlation for the sets of themes indicated over-all validity of the grading. It was never lower than .50.

To compare the writing ability of the students in the two types of themes, we used two methods, one a simple comparison of the individual grades given by each rater, the other a comparison of the median of the grades given by all three raters. In both cases we kept the grades for interest and for construction and organization separate. We counted the number of "better" grades given the themes in each category. These totals indicated a slightly better rating on teacher-directed themes both for interest and for construction and organization.

TABLE 1

Total "Better" Grades for All Students
Given by Individual Graders

Interest			Construction/Organization		
Student Directed Themes	Teacher Directed Themes	No Difference	Student Directed Themes	Teacher Directed Themes	No Difference
101	130	192	97	125	192

Total "Better" Grades for All Students
Median Grades by Raters

32	35	71	26	34	76

We then divided the students, according to the grades they made during the first nine weeks of the semester, into three groups: above average (A or B), average (C), and below average (D or E), and totalled their "better" grades for the two types of themes.

TABLE 2
Total "Better" Grades for A and B Students

	Interest			Construction/Organization		
	Student Directed Themes	Teacher Directed Themes	No Difference	Student Directed Themes	Teacher Directed Themes	No Difference
Individual Graders	13	28	48	18	21	44
Median Grades	4	9	16	4	8	16
			Total "Better" Grades for C Students			
Individual Graders	45	75	84	37	65	89
Median Grades	13	22	32	8	16	39
			Total "Better" Grades for D and E Students			
Individual Graders	33	16	34	27	26	30
Median Grades	13	2	13	11	6	11

As can be seen, the average and above-average students, as a whole, did better when writing for the teacher, both in interest and in construction and organization. The below-average students, on the other hand, did better when writing for their fellow students. Individual students in all three groups showed wide variation from these norms, some above-average students writing decidedly better for their classmates, some below-average students writing decidedly better for the teacher. In a large number of cases, of course, there was no difference between the grades on a pair of themes, though this sameness of writing was noticeably less in themes written by below-average students.

There are, to be sure, many possible reasons for these differences in grades. It may be that students who normally make low grades on themes do so partly because they are tense when they know a grade will be put in the grade book for their work. It is also possible that these students have a more difficult time "psyching out" the teacher than do the better students.

In any case, it is apparent from the results of this research that most below-average students, and some who are average or above-average, would profit from writing, at least occasionally, themes that are directed towards their fellow-students.

There are many possibilities for future research to be conducted along lines similar to those we have followed. Other real audiences suggested by Peter Elbow, including proving to the draft board the religious beliefs of conscientious objectors might be tested, using these or different methods. A follow-up to the present project might involve discovering whether the constant use of student-directed themes with a below-average class (for perhaps a whole semester) would improve the writing they do for the teacher.

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE AMOUNT OF READING AND THE QUALITY OF WRITING BY TENTH GRADE BOYS?

Richard Nakamura, ASU Graduate Student

It is often suggested by teachers that Johnny writes well because he's an avid reader. But does he? Is there a relationship between the quantity of reading and the quality of writing? Donald M. Murray in his A WRITER TEACHES WRITING (Boston: Houghton, 1968, p. 106), proclaims this as one of the myths in composition teaching, saying that "there are writers, both student and professional, who read relatively little and write very well". On the other hand, there are others who claim that such a relationship does exist. A brief review of the research available on this issue suggests that there seems to be a relationship between these two skills--reading and writing. But the issue is clouded by other factors such as intelligence, varying definitions of the term reading, and an apparent lack of agreement on what constitutes good writing. Thus, the poor English teacher ends up where he began--in the dark.

To find out for myself whether some relationship existed between reading and writing (and to meet a requirement for a course at the same time), a relatively simple research study--one which could be conducted by any classroom teacher--was launched early in Fall 1969.

The first thing which had to be done was to state the problem, refined to provide definite directions to the kinds of data needed and the way in which they would be treated. It was also necessary to determine the limits of the study, the population, the time span, and the specific aspects of reading and writing to be considered. The problem as finally stated was to find out whether there was a relationship between the amount of reading students did and the quality of their writing. Amount of reading referred to two criteria: (1) the number of books, magazines and newspapers read, and (2) the amount of time devoted to the reading of these materials. Since quantity was the criterion sought after, no attempt was made to determine the quality, difficulty, or length of the materials read. Quality of writing was to be determined by two class compositions, 200 to 250 words in length, by a team of three raters.

To get a range of abilities, data from thirty sophomore boys from three B-track English classes were used. The study was limited to boys to minimize the number of variables. It was also felt that boys would respond more candidly to the items on the questionnaire and more normally in an experimental situation than girls. In a study such as this, it was necessary to accept a few assumptions. The first was that responses from students were sincere, honest and accurate. Secondly, it was assumed that the writing samples were representative of the students.

In order to test the hypothesis that students who read more wrote better, data were gathered on (1) the amount of reading, and (2) the quality of writing. Data for the first were gathered by the use of a questionnaire developed for this study. Twenty-five items relating to three types of reading materials were included: (1) books, (2) newspapers, and (3) magazines. Students were asked for the number of books, newspapers, and magazines read since school ended in May 1969 and the amount of time spent reading newspapers and magazines (it was rapidly apparent that time is not a true indication of the amount of materials read, since reading rate varied widely). Although a few items on the questionnaire pertained to kinds of materials read, the emphasis was on amount of reading. I administered the questionnaire to avoid any misunderstanding on any of the items. Students were asked to respond to the items honestly and to approximate answers rather than leave any question unanswered. No time limit was set, and most of the students completed the questionnaire in about 10 to 15 minutes.

To determine the quality of writing, two writing samples about a week apart were obtained from students. Paul Diederich's eight rules for writing experiment were followed. (SCHOOL REVIEW, December, 1946, pp. 584-592).

1. At least two essays on different topics are needed.
2. Topics be within the students' comprehension.
3. All students write on the same topics.
4. All papers be written in class.
5. Sufficient time be allowed for writing, revising, and rewriting.
6. Time for writing be free from other matter.
7. Papers be marked in accordance with criteria evolved beforehand.
8. All papers be marked by at least two raters.

The first topic, intended to elicit an expository or argumentative theme, was "Should the United States Pull Out of Viet Nam Now?" For the second theme, of a descriptive-narrative nature, students were given a beginning: "This was the moment I had been waiting for. As soon as everyone left, I . . ." Students were told to write their compositions as they usually did with free access to the dictionary, although few students used them. One class period (50 minutes) was allotted to writing each assignment; this proved to be more than enough time.

Papers were categorized by three raters as "good," "fair," or "poor". The raters, all experienced in teaching high school English, followed a set of criteria in judging the themes and based their decisions on past experiences with high school students writing. The four criteria were:

1. Coherence and logic--thought and word coherence, logical planning of the whole theme, and stimulating or interesting discussion on the subject.
2. Development of ideas--overall effectiveness, content, evidence of support of generalization, originality of treatment, honesty in expression, and sincerity of expression.
3. Diction--correct choice of words and appropriate wording.
4. Grammar and mechanics--standard grammar, usage, and mechanics.

Because of the small sample (30 boys) and in order to get an adequate distribution in each category (good, fair, poor), raters were instructed to categorize the papers on a relative standard (comparing these students' with each other) rather than against the absolute standards (comparing these students with some hypothetical tenth grade boys) of writing proficiency. With three raters judging two writing samples of thirty boys, students did not automatically fall into three categories. Thus, it was necessary to use a point system to arrive at the mean or average rating for each student. Arbitrarily, the nine students with the highest averages were classified good writers; the nine with the lowest averages, poor writers; and the remaining twelve, fair writers.

The next step involved the analysis of the responses on the questionnaire for each group of writers. To simplify the data, mean scores of items were used.

As indicated in Table 1, the mean score on item 1 showed that the students rated fair on their writing samples read the most number of books this past summer (5.2 books), followed by the good group (5.0 books), and then by the poor group (1.8 books). The mean scores for all groups on the item 2, the number of books read voluntarily since school began this year, did not differ significantly: 2.6 books for the good and fair groups and 2.7 books for the poor groups. Concerning the number of books required as outside reading during the last school year (item 3), the good group was required to read 6.0 books, followed by the poor group, 4.2 books. On item 4, of the books that were required last year, the group reading the most was the good group, 6.0 of the 7.2 books required, or 83 percent. The fair group read 4.5 of the 6.0 books required, or 75 percent, followed by the poor group, which read 2.3 of the 4.2 books required, or 55 percent. Responses for item 5 indicate that the good group owned the most books, 31.3, followed by the fair group with 26.6 books, and by the poor group, 14.6 books. Of these, item 6 shows that the good group had read 27 of the 31.3 books or 86%, the fair group had read 20.4 of the 26.6 books, or 76%, and the poor group had read 11.4 of the 14.6 books, or 78%.

TABLE 1
Mean Scores for Items Relating to Books

Items on Questionnaire	Good Writers	Fair Writers	Poor Writers
1. During this past summer, approximately how many books did you read?	5.0	5.2	1.8
2. Since school started this year, approximately how many books have you read voluntarily?	2.6	2.6	2.7
3. Approximately how many books were you required to read during the last school year?	7.2	6.0	4.2
4. Of the outside reading requirements, how many books did you read?	6.0	4.5	2.3
5. Approximately how many books (including paperbacks) do you own?	31.3	26.6	14.6
6. Approximately how many of these have you read?	27.0	20.4	11.4

The data on newspaper reading, as indicated in Table 2, showed that the families of the good readers subscribed to 1.7 newspapers as compared to 1.4 for the fair group, and 1.2 for the poor group. Of these newspapers, the good group read on the average 1.1 newspaper, the fair and poor groups both reading .8. As far as the amount of time spent each day reading the newspaper, the good group indicated that they spent about 6.6 minutes a day reading the paper, the fair group 7.9 minutes, and the poor group, 5 minutes.

TABLE 2
Mean Scores for Items Relating to Newspapers

Items on Questionnaire	Good Writers	Fair Writers	Poor Writers
7. How many newspapers does your family subscribe to?	1.7	1.4	1.2
8. How many of these do you read regularly?	1.1	.8	.8
9. How much time do you now spend each day reading newspapers (including school papers)?	6.6 Minutes	7.9 Minutes	5.0 Minutes

Data from items pertaining to magazines, as shown in Table 3, indicate that families of all three groups subscribed to a similar number of magazines, 3.2, 3.4, and 3.1. The *good* group on the average read one magazine more (3.1) than the *fair* (2.1) or *poor* (2.0) groups. The *poor* group spent the most time, 28.8 minutes per week, reading magazines, followed by the *good* group, 26.4 minutes per week, and by the *fair* group, 19.5 minutes per week. The *fair* group read the most comic books per week, 1.8. The *poor* and *good* groups read about one less, or .8 and .6, respectively.

TABLE 3

Mean Scores for Items Relating to Newspapers

Items on Questionnaire	Good Writers	Fair Writers	Poor Writers
10. How many magazines does your family subscribe to?	3.2	3.4	3.1
11. How many magazines a month do you read regularly?	3.1	2.1	2.0
12. How much time do you spend each week reading magazines?	26.4 Minutes	19.5 Minutes	28.8 Minutes
13. On the average, how many comic books do you read each week?	.6	1.8	.8

The following observations can be made from this limited experiment with its limited data:

1. As a whole, the students classified as *good* and *fair* writers (a) owned more books, (b) read a greater percentage of the books owned, (c) were required to do more outside reading, and (d) completed more of the outside reading that was required than the students classified as *poor* writers.
2. The only item about books which showed no difference among all three groups concerned the number of books read since September of this school year. All groups read about two and one-half books each.
3. The families of the *good* writers subscribed to more newspapers than families of the other two groups, and the *good* writers also read more newspapers than the other two groups.
4. Concerning the time spent reading the newspapers, students classified as *fair* writers spent more time than the other two groups.
5. The families of all three groups subscribed to approximately the same number of magazines, but the students in the *good* group read more magazines (not including comic books) than students in the other two groups; the *fair* group read the most comic books.

Generally speaking, there seemed to be a relationship between the quality of writing and the quantity of reading among the thirty boys involved in this study. The boys who wrote better had also read more. Environmental factors seemed to have a significant influence on reading, for there was a definite relationship between the availability of reading materials and the amount of reading. In two cases (books and magazines), the students who had read more had greater access to materials. Also, the students who were required to do more reading did so.

It should be mentioned here that this study in no way purported to find any causal relationship between amount of reading and quality of writing. It was intended to find out whether students who had performed better in writing than some of their peers tended to read more than their peers who did not write as well. As far as the data of this study will allow us to see, it did indicate some relationship between the factors of reading and writing. Obviously it would be both erroneous and presumptuous to generalize from findings from such a limited study as this--limited in time and population--to all students, but the implications for the teacher as applied to this population or to a similar population could be significant. In this situation, for example, the teacher could put more emphasis on voluntary reading of all kinds in the teaching of writing. More attention could be given to making reading materials more easily accessible to students--in their homes (difficult to do) and in the classroom (not too difficult)--and to allot some time for so-called leisure reading.

It might prove interesting and worthwhile for English teachers as individuals or as a department to conduct similar studies with their own students. A study such as the one described here requires no sophisticated knowledge of statistics, nor does it necessitate taking instructional time from the students, since composition writing and surveys such as the questionnaire are natural parts of English instruction. Conducted in a school by classroom teachers, the possibilities for a much more refined study are clear. For example, students could be asked to keep a log of their reading rather than to leave the facts of their reading habits to memory. Also, such a study could be conducted over a whole school year, which I was not able to do.

The experience of conducting a research study, unsophisticated but accurate, was rewarding. I think teachers who try it would find it even more rewarding.

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DOES STUDENT REVISION OF COMPOSITION REALLY PAY OFF?

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She flinched as a wave-like movement from the back to the front of each row resulted in a sloppy stack of second-time-around compositions, awaiting their final judgments by the Order of the Red Pencil. The bell rang. Students jostled and gushed forth from the room--out to freedom and irresponsibility. The room's hushed silence, magnified by the oppressive mount of themes to be dealt with, elicited a sigh from the English teacher. She shuffled to her feet, picked up her small personal calendar and resignedly scratched out the words, "Get re-acquainted with hubby!"

After many long evenings of being tied down to evaluating a stack of papers I knew I'd face again after student corrections, I've entertained thoughts of hari-kari--or even raising a family--anything that wouldn't require a revision. I wondered just how effective all this revising was, and if anybody was getting any practice at it besides me. It seemed I was doubling my paper-grading load; some students were submitting inferior work of the first draft and depending on me to make the necessary changes for the draft which would be graded (and what teacher will give her own work a poor grade?). Where do the students' critical abilities enter in? Is the revising process worth all the time it takes? I decided to find what answers I could to these questions.

Checking out what other teachers had done to systematically measure the effects and effectiveness of revision gave me many opinions and little verified evidence. Perhaps everyone automatically assumes that the more time and effort a writer invests in a paper, the better it's obviously going to be. Although my reading was cursory, I did find plenty of testimonials in favor of revising, but little else. While praise of revision seemed to be semi-universal, agreement as to the process was anything but. Lorean Anderson ("Ways and Means in the Teaching of Writing," ENGLISH JOURNAL, Dec. 1962) suggested using any of these 4 methods: (1) papers are read aloud in small groups of students and revisions are made, (2) papers are exchanged and corrections are made, (3) teacher "red pencils" the papers in the margins, and (4) pupils correct their own papers, using grammar handbooks and dictionaries. Helen Olson ("What Is Good Teaching of Composition?" ENGLISH JOURNAL, April 1961) adamantly believes the pre-vision evaluation should be conducted by the teacher alone. Still others praise the practice of revision but leave the exact method to the discretion of the teacher. Since no one seemed to know any more than I did about what had been proved most--or least--effective, I chose to use the student-evaluation method.

As it happened, I'd probably never have survived the month if any other method had been used, since student evaluation means the teacher doesn't have to read a paper twice. The main justification of this method is that I believe it holds more long-range promise for the student. A student needs to learn responsibility for and ability in critically examining his own writing in all classes, not just English. Therefore, I chose the student-evaluation form of revision, optimistically hoping that these students would latch onto this practice for use whenever writing is required or needed.

Basically, I hypothesized that students writing compositions in multiple drafts would tend to produce writing which is of greater overall effectiveness than students writing compositions in single drafts. I carried out the experiment with 2 classes of B-Track freshman students, measuring the results of the work of 15 students from each class, 30 students in all. With the exception of two students, all of the group came from WASP, middle-class backgrounds. Two-thirds, or 20 out of 30, were girls, a fact which appeared to affect the tabulation of the data.

In setting up the research procedure, I had originally planned to keep one class writing multiple drafts for all 4 assignments, and the other class writing single drafts through all 4 assignments. However, to cancel out the possibility of either group being weighted by more innate general ability or writing talent, this procedure was reversed halfway through the experiment. Each class used the multiple-draft method for 2 assignments and the single-draft method for the other 2 assignments, but each class used a different method for any one assignment.

The typical multiple-draft method was conducted as follows: preceding the writing, class time had been spent in discussing the steps of multiple-draft writing, (1) getting ideas on paper, organizing and developing, and (2) sharpening word choice, clarity and style, so the first day we discussed the assigned topic. Once the students were sufficiently stimulated, primed, and otherwise convinced that they might be interested in writing, they were to cast restraint to the winds and write as their ideas flowed freely--or at least trickled. It was to be a brainstorming session with no concern given to mechanics and organization. Most of them were unconcerned about mechanics and organization anyway so this was no real inhibition. The first day's writing always proved the liveliest with student comments back and forth and humor and noise. Handwriting was undoubtedly some of the worst I've ever witnessed, but at the same time it was exciting, for much of it reflected the hurried scrawl of someone excited about what he had to say and fighting to get it down fast. At the end of this first mad session, students would number their papers with a "1" and turn them into me. The writing of the second draft was introduced by a review of organization and developmental skills. Some time had been spent earlier in the year discussing and practicing these skills, and the review for the second draft was handled through a paragraph written on the board or on a transparency which the class reconstructed, organizing ideas by importance and sequence for exposition, or adding details if the paragraph were narrative or descriptive. Obviously, in writing the second draft, students were to emphasize organization and development of ideas. They were expected to add or cut or shift ideas and details around as needed. Each student was the judge of his own work, and he had to use his own discrimination in shaping his paper. Second drafts were marked "2" and submitted to me at the end of the class.

The emphases on the third draft were sentence structure, clarity, and word choice. Again, these aspects of writing had been stressed earlier in the year, but as review we built several sentences on the board, beginning with kernel sentences and expanding them to stress specificity and variation. Now, students had two drafts and could select the best from either, and the third draft involved selectivity as well as new construction. There was much to do during each writing period, and students seldom felt they'd had enough writing time, particularly on the third draft. I felt, however, that students taking their writing home would create more problems than it would solve, so sometimes the writing of one draft would extend into a second day. Since it was important for the experiment to keep the conditions in both classes nearly comparable, students were not allowed to take their work home.

The single-draft method involved less time and obviously fewer steps. Whichever class was writing single drafts spent the same amount of time reviewing the principles of writing as did the multiple-draft method. The main difference in the review was that the multiple-draft group got the material in 3 small doses, the single-draft group, in one large dose. Once the writing got underway, the single-draft group was allowed two periods to complete their writing. The method they used consisted simply of taking a few minutes to jot down ideas and then writing out their compositions. Compositions then were copied in ink and submitted to me.

The papers of the 30 students in the experiment (15 from each class) were numbered, typed exactly as written, and duplicated. Copies and an instruction sheet and grading sheet were given 3 graders (all experienced fellow English teachers). Following are the 4 assignments and sample papers for assignments 2 and 3:

COMPOSITION ASSIGNMENT #1:

We had just completed several stories and poems dealing with suspense. From one of these works students were to dramatize a scene, as though to be produced for stage or screen. Script was to involve actions and stage/prop directions as well as dialogue.

COMPOSITION ASSIGNMENT #2:

The students were to choose one of the following six quotes as the text for an essay. Their own interpretations were to be supported with examples from their reading or their experience:

When glamorous personality is your trademark....
.... a law unto yourself....
The dark time of life....
Trying on attitudes....
The source of one's joy is also often the source of one's sorrow.

EXAMPLE: student writing.

"Pessimism Makes the Dark Time of Life"

The rain beat a steady rhythm upon the school roof.

"This is such a terrible day!" Jane said in a dejected state. "Look at this pile of homework. And how am I going to get home in this weather?"

"Oh, it's not so bad," Mary said after contemplating a minute. "I've just got some math and history; they won't take long. I can't wait to get out in that rain and play around."

It's all a matter of how you look at it. What one person may presume to be utter hopelessness and despair, another may look at with glorious exuberance.

"Nixon's the one" read a sign post in the history room.

"Nixon hasn't done a thing for this country," complained Mary. "This country is headed for destruction under him."

"Hah," challenged Jane, "Nixon's been working his head off ever since he's taken office. Why, he's changed the draft laws, he's working on welfare, and...."

"So? My life hasn't been changed one bit by his taking office!" retorted Mary.

"And it's a good thing," Jane thought aloud. "See how well he's preserved our freedom?"

We could go on and on. Life seems so much happier looking at the bright side; having faith in Nixon, liking rain. Almost any situation can be changed into optimism if it is viewed right. It can seem full of promise and hope, but pessimism can turn hope and light into dark doom and desperate despair.

COMPOSITION ASSIGNMENT #3:

This was a descriptive assignment in which a student chose one of the following to describe, using sensory imagery and concrete details.

Sights, sounds, smells, and tastes peculiar to the Christmas season....
People at different seasons of the year....
The hour after getting up, with images of the five senses....

EXAMPLE: student writing.

"In the Bathroom"

As I walked into the bathroom I felt a soft bit of fur under my foot, then a piercing scream echoing in my ears. A bolt of lightning shot through my head and I felt a pain in the foot that just a moment ago had discovered the soft fur. I walked over to the sink. I could smell bacon burning and heard my mother telling the stove what she thought of it. I turned on the water, the handle of the faucet cold in my hand. I put the washcloth, rough but sweet-smelling, into the hot water, making it soft and squishy. The steam from the water made all the things look as though a film covered them. I reached for my toothbrush, knocking down the others. The brushes hit the counter with a sound resembling a crashing cabinet. The toothpaste comes out of the tube too fast and it goes all over the sink and my hand, looking like a snake that has just been stretched to dead. As the hard points of the brush hit my teeth and the sweet peppermint taste is spread across my teeth, I can hear the brush going back and forth, like sandpaper on wood. I use a mouthwash that feels as if acid is eating away at my mouth. Finished, I walked into the kitchen just as my mother finished making some good bacon. I tell her I don't want any because I just brushed my teeth and she just about has a breakdown right there. I wonder why.

COMPOSITION ASSIGNMENT #4:

The students were to choose from the following two topics:

(1)....Defend a personal view convincingly.
(2)....Consider the "Person I Would Most Like to Be," describing the age, occupation, character, appearance, and recreations of this ideal person. For topic (2) elaborate on how each aspect of the ideal person relates to the whole, e.g., does the ideal person's recreations suit the occupation, could a person conceivably be all these things at once?

The 4 assignments involved various kinds of writing, themes 2 and 4 were expository, theme 1 both descriptive and narrative, and theme 3 descriptive.

The 3 readers graded each of the 4 sets of 30 papers each, and ranked papers in each set (from 1 = high to 30 = low). Then, with the help of my good and kind engineering-student husband, I began to tabulate the data. Ultimately, we compiled 11 rather impressive number-ridden charts, analyzing the data from various combinations.

Several problems should be noted which would affect the data and the conclusions derived from the data. (1) The subjectivity of reader grading and ranking makes any ratings suspect, since it is difficult to know why any rater felt as he did about any one paper, much less 120 papers. Rater variability is well known as a major problem in evaluating composition. Three raters may agree that one theme is a "D" but for quite different reasons (rater 1 because the paper had numerous mechanical errors, rater 2 because it had not stuck to the assigned topic, rater 3 because it did not stick to the thesis announced in the first paragraph), and then totally disagree on yet another theme using the same reasoning that caused agreement with the earlier theme (rater 1 gives the paper a "B" because it had few mechanical errors, rater 2 an "A" because it was on the assigned topic, and rater 3 a "C" because it did not stick completely to the topic announced in the first paragraph), and on and on. (2) Theme assignment 1 involved rewriting a scene from a story or poem earlier studied in class. Since only one of the 3 raters was familiar with all stories or poems in the unit, the remaining 2 raters could not easily determine the degree or originality in the student writing.

Using rankings of the raters for all students on all assignments, I constructed a table which might reveal some degree of difference in performance on single-draft writing and multiple-draft writing. Remember, 1 = highest ranking, 30 = lowest ranking.

TABLE 1

Student	Mean Rank on Single-draft papers	Mean Rank on Multiple-draft papers	Increase of Ranking from Single-draft	Increase of Ranking from Multiple-draft
1	25.70	21.00	---	4.70
2	5.17	3.67	---	1.50
3	14.16	18.00	3.84	---
4	20.67	16.34	---	4.33
5	20.33	9.33	---	11.00
6	8.33	9.67	1.34	---
7	16.16	3.00	---	13.16
8	15.16	16.16	1.00	---
9	5.83	5.67	---	.16
10	23.67	24.84	1.17	---
11	8.33	14.67	6.34	---
12	10.33	12.67	2.34	---
13	14.00	9.00	---	5.00
14	25.50	24.00	---	1.55
15	9.84	11.67	1.83	---
16	13.33	9.00	---	4.33
17	16.50	14.33	---	2.17
18	12.17	16.00	3.83	---
19	14.50	15.33	.83	---
20	12.84	12.33	---	.51
21	16.84	20.67	3.83	---
22	4.67	8.84	4.17	---
23	17.84	22.17	4.33	---
24	7.67	9.67	2.00	---
25	23.50	19.33	---	4.17
26	20.5	22.00	1.50	---
27	11.17	18.00	6,83	---
28	22.84	20.00	---	2.84
29	12.50	10.67	---	1.83
30	20.17	7.33	---	12.84

Obviously, 15 students improved their rankings in the single-draft and 15 in the multiple-draft, but the intriguing thing is that the greatest changes in rankings of students improving through the single-draft was 6.83, while 3 students changed their mean rankings more than 10 points in the multiple-draft.

Were I to re-run this experiment, I would change several procedures. First, I'd select assignments involving writing in which students had some previous practice--the first assignment I used required a form of writing, drama, few students had any experience with. Second, I'd make sure readers of the themes had background to handle the grading and ranking (my fault this time). Third, I would like to have used a broader sampling over a longer period of time. Fourth, I'd try to reduce the reader variability factor by using more judges or by having practice rating sessions of all raters. Fifth, I need to know more about statistical methods and research methods generally to be more exact in gathering and analyzing data. Sixth, I'd like to space the intervals of writing more so students wouldn't get turned off by the writing.

Many projects became apparent as I began tabulating the data. We need more research about reactions of boys versus girls in single-draft or multiple-draft writing. We really do not know what methods of teaching writing work best with boys or girls or what techniques of writing might best be taught first or last with girls or boys. We do not know what kinds of writing appeal more to boys than girls. Are raters more likely to agree in grading and ranking descriptive or narrative or argumentative writing? Assuming that multiple-draft writing has some carryover, how much and how could we ascertain it? What kinds of evaluation techniques work well for students evaluating their own work or that of their peers? There are many areas of composition and composition teaching which seriously deserve research.

I found my experiment to be very informative. I discovered that students generally wrote better papers (according to readers' marks and my own opinion) on descriptive assignments, and the girls appeared to benefit more than boys from revision. More important, I learned something about problems in teaching writing and I learned that revision does seem to help some students improve their writing. Therein lies the reward.

CAN ENGLISH TEACHERS CONDUCT RESEARCH?

The answer to that question has to be a qualified "yes". Some professional researchers argue that English teachers have little time, less patience, even less interest, and no ability to run any research worthy of the name. Too many English teachers daily prove that these arguments have merit. Still, some English teachers (and not all of them college professors who are notorious for wasting their time in such profitless enterprises as literary or educational research) have conducted and published research which has led to curriculum re-thinking or changes. Apparently not aware that English teachers cannot do research or that other English teachers will not read the results, these teachers have the courage to admit that they do not know the answer to a question or that they do not know which method of teaching composition (or poetry or linguistics or drama) gets the best results, and they go their merry way investigating and wondering while other teachers wonder why any English teacher would question the value of the theme-a-week or diagramming or the value of grammar in teaching composition. There are so many things about English teaching that everyone knows--grammar is good for students, outlining leads to better compositions, literature doesn't have to be enjoyed by students today since they will be grateful to the English teacher later in their lives, memorizing spelling or vocabulary lists will lead to improvement, topic sentences enhance student writing, etc. But not too long ago, every astronomer knew that the sun revolved around the earth, every scientist knew that gold could be made from baser metals, every physician knew that blood letting was good for a patient, and every dramatic critic knew that a well-made play had to employ the Aristotelian Unities. Maybe it's better to be a little less sure of what we know, and to establish through something more rigorous than our intuitions the truth (or falsity) of all these ideas that "every English teacher knows".

The following experiments are not necessarily models of scientific percision or statistical validity, but they are attempts by some teachers to find some answers. Each deserves a careful reading, and nearly all of them could be replicated and updated by any reasonably imaginative English teacher. Maybe more important, each of them should be periodically checked out to discover whether what was once the truth is any longer valid. And each of these experiments should establish, once and for all, that English teachers can conduct valid and seminal research. Other English teachers should take heart and do likewise. All of us have questioned one of those "all English teachers know that" statements. Why not do more than question?

RESEARCH IN LANGUAGE

1. English teachers sometimes justify diagramming because it helps students to visualize the sentence elements, because it is a skill all students must have to write good sentences, because it is "mental discipline," or because it is fun. Anthony Tovatt questioned just how much carryover there was to adult life and asked 150 adults (graduate students in education, "Engineering English" students, undergraduate students, and PTA members) to diagram a complex sentence and to answer these questions: "(1) When you write, do you visualize the elements of your sentences as you would diagram them? Yes? No? (2) Briefly, what would you suggest be given most emphasis in high school English language classes?" The 150 adults were given 15 minutes to complete the diagram and the questions, but they had no warning that they would be in any kind of test. The results? The "suggestions for greater emphasis fell naturally into the following categories: grammar (parts of speech, diagramming, and syntax), written work (without grammar), oral exercises (without grammar), and other. Included in the last were vocabulary, spelling, field trips, and reading. Aside from the fact that 96 per cent of the group was unable to

diagram the sentence, perhaps the two most significant findings revealed by the experiment are the following: (1) that only 2 of 6 persons who were able to diagram the sentence stated that they actually applied diagramming skills to their own writing, and (2) that 57 of the persons who were unable to diagram the sentence still maintained that, when they wrote, they visualized sentence elements as they would diagram them! The implications are so clear that they need scarcely be pointed out." Anthony Tovatt, "Diagraming: A Sterile Skill," ENGLISH JOURNAL, February 1952, pp. 91-93.

2. One of the standard justifications of teaching traditional grammar and devoting time to grammatical analysis and learning grammatical terminology is that students will be handicapped in college entrance examinations. David M. Litsey's "Trends in College Placement Tests in Freshman English," ENGLISH JOURNAL, May 1956, pp. 250-256 is a survey of 194 colleges and universities and their entrance exams. An analysis of the items (altogether 25,231) on these tests revealed the ability to punctuate and capitalize accounted for nearly one-third (31.86%) of all items, followed by usage (29.62%), spelling (18.11%), and vocabulary (13.15%). Identification of parts of speech or gerunds, phrases, objects, and the like represented only 2.34% of the items. That tiny portion of the tests hardly seems to justify teaching grammar for four years or three years, but does it even suggest any rationale for teaching grammar (for this one purpose, to prepare students for college exams) for even one year? Litsey notes, "In the final analysis, therefore, it may be stated confidently that colleges no longer are interested in whether an entering student knows technical grammatical terminology, punctuation rules, evanescent pronunciations, or the like, but rather colleges are concerned with proof that a student can actually use language to good effect". (p. 252)

3. Lest the English teacher think that Litsey's 1956 study is dated and grammar has found its way back into college entrance exams, a more recent study is Carl A. Barth's "Kinds of Language Knowledge Required by College Entrance Examinations," ENGLISH JOURNAL, December 1965, pp. 824-829. Supporting teacher knowledge of modern grammars and having heard the usual defense of traditional grammar as needed for college entrance tests, Barth examined three widely used tests, the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), the College Board Achievement Tests, and the Writing Sample, all three administered by the Educational Testing Service of Princeton, New Jersey. Surveying these tests, Barth says, "shows that no knowledge of the terminology of the present school grammar is needed by a student to succeed on the test". (p. 824) Although Barth found much to question in the tests, he continually notes that in each and every section of all three tests there is no proof that any knowledge of traditional grammatical terminology would help any student in passing these examinations.

RESEARCH IN COMPOSITION

1. One of the most widely cited and quoted studies of English teachers' workloads is William J. Dusel's "Determining an Efficient Teaching Load in English," ILLINOIS ENGLISH BULLETIN, October 1955, pp. 1-19. Originally a report to California school administrators challenging a 1950 "Survey of Teachers' Work-Week in California High Schools" which reported the English teacher's workload as 46 hours and 15 minutes per week, this article concentrates on the time needed by an English teacher to teach composition with any effectiveness. Limiting his discussion to four methods of marking student writing, Dusel had 430 teachers mark papers and found that Method I, Marking to Assign a Grade (with almost no marks and no comments) required an average of 3.5 minutes to do 250 words or 8.8 hours to mark 150 papers. Method II, Marking to Indicate Faults (many marks, no comments, no help) took an average of

5.9 minutes for 250 words or 14.8 hours to do 150 papers. Method III, Marking to Correct (many marks and comments, all requiring the student to rewrite the paper as the teacher told him, the teacher as GOD) took an average of 5.9 minutes to do 250 words or 14.8 hours for 150 papers. And Method IV, Marking to Teach Writing and Thinking (many questions to the students and much help) took 8.6 minutes for 250 words or 21.5 hours for 150 papers. The report notes the following, among other points:

1. Secondary school pupils need continual, supervised practice in written composition throughout their required years of English.
2. The amount of time needed by the English teacher to supervise pupils' writing practice varies directly with the effectiveness of the supervision.
3. Teachers report great difficulty in reading and marking compositions during school hours.
4. Graded compositions glanced at by the pupil and thrown away, or rewritten incorrectly, are of little educative value.
5. The concern shown here for numbers of words of composition should not be interpreted to mean that mere practice in writing leads inevitably to learning to write well.
6. A revised English program is needed to develop the writing competence of all secondary school pupils.

All in all, a thought-provoking study, even though some of the points Dusel makes deserve research of their own. Examples, do students really need continual supervised practice in written composition and what evidence do we have (other than intuition) that practice in writing is worth the time or will do anybody any good? What is needed in English teacher evaluation (amount of comments and marks and time) of student writing to do the student any good? What kinds of marks or comments will help what kinds of students, or are all students alike in this respect? What is the optimum time a teacher can spend to get the optimum results? Are graded papers tossed away by students really a waste of time, and how do we know that? Does rewriting of papers really accomplish anything that more themes (not rewritten) would not do? Do teachers really have to read all student papers? Would peer evaluation do more good (a study of peer and teacher evaluation of written work is Howard Pierson's "Peer Correction vs. Teacher Correction of Writing" in the Spring 1968 CALIFORNIA ENGLISH JOURNAL, pp. 20-27) than teacher evaluation? Does assigning writing rather than teaching it do anybody any good (probably not, but who has tried to find out?)? The real problem for all teachers of English is defining "good" or "effective" writing, though virtually all English teachers have some idea of what "poor" or "bad" or "ineffective" writing is. With no clear agreement on what constitutes the "good" paper, we have trouble measuring growth in writing, though Paul B. Diederich's "How to Measure Growth in Writing Ability" in the April 1966 ENGLISH JOURNAL, pp. 435-449 is helpful. Incidentally, why do some English teachers insist on "grading" or "marking" or "correcting" student writing with all the pejorative overtones of those terms? Why can't student writing be "evaluated" or "commented upon" or just simply "read"? Why do we insist on using terms which virtually force us to find something wrong, though admittedly students rarely fail to give us ample opportunity to find fault. A self-fulfilling prophecy?

2. Several years back, James Conant recommended that English teachers require a theme-a-week from all students, a recommendation eagerly mimicked by too many school administrators who failed to note (or decided to forget) Conant's other recommendations--that English teachers have no more than 4 classes of 25 students each. Two writers have questioned the value of the theme-a-week approach, irrespective of the number of students a teacher has. In a quite simple experiment (which

has been called "chancy" but provocative by several reviewers), Frank Heys, Jr. and his staff discussed the need to provide improved instruction in writing in the face of pressures to increase amounts of students' writing. First, however, they determined to find evidence that a theme-a-week would do any good. Finding no research or proof, they did what a good English department ought to do--they decided to find out for themselves what other departments already knew but had never proved. Two eleventh grade classes were used, one class writing the equivalent of a theme each week, the other class excused from practically all writing for the entire year. "The results at the end of the year indicated that both groups had improved in their ability to write; that both groups had improved about the same; but that if either class could be said to have made the greater improvement, it was the class that had done little or no writing." Deciding that this small scale experiment was too limited, Heys and his English staff used 8 English classes the following year, two for each of the four high school grades, matching the two in each year as closely as possible. One class in each year was designated the "writing" class, and students in that class wrote the equivalent of a theme-a-week which was criticized and revised or rewritten. The other class in each year was designated the "reading" class, and students in that class wrote a theme approximately every three weeks and used the remainder of the time for reading and doing usual class activities. All students were given the STEP Writing Test (Form 2A) in the fall and the same test (Form 2B) the following spring. Aware that some teachers would object to the use of purely objective tests to evaluate writing, Heys and his staff had students write two test compositions, one in fall and one in spring. Three independent readers evaluated these compositions. What were the results of this larger experiment? ". . . except for some seniors (but not all) and except for some low groups (but not all) and except for the area of content and organization (but not always), we got consistently better results from those students in reading classes. It is difficult to do other than generalize since the two methods of evaluation do not always confirm each other. Specifically, the STEP Tests indicate that the middle groups, taken as a whole, learn to write about equally well with either method; the composition evaluations, on the other hand, contradict this finding and indicate a superior gain for those students in reading classes." Though urging more research in the area, Heys listed these findings as supported by the research:

"1. The claim that 'the way to learn to write is to write' is not substantiated by this experiment.
2. The claim that ability to write well is related to the amount of writing done is not substantiated by this experiment.
3. For many students reading is a positive influence on writing ability.
4. The influence of reading on the ability to write appears to be a separate factor, not directly related to the teacher's personality and enthusiasm."

The article is not long and it is worth reading. Frank Heys, Jr., "The Theme-a-Week Assumption: A Report of an Experiment," ENGLISH JOURNAL, May 1962, pp. 320-322. Another study of the value of writing frequently is Lois Arnold's "Writer's Cramp and Eyestrain--Are They Paying Off?" ENGLISH JOURNAL, January 1964, pp. 10-15. Using 2 schools and 8 classes of tenth grade students, Arnold compared 4 "different approaches to intensity of teacher evaluation and frequency of writing". (1) In 2 classes, students wrote 3 times a semester and writing was given only moderate evaluation; (2) in 2 classes, students wrote at least 4 days each week and writing was given moderate evaluation; (3) in 2 classes, students wrote 3 times each semester and writing was given intensive evaluation requiring revision; and (4) in 2 classes, students wrote once a week and writing was given intensive evaluation requiring revision. STEP Essay and STEP Writing Tests were given before the experiment to the

193 students in the 8 classes, and in the following May alternate forms of both STEP Essay and STEP Writing Tests were administered. Arnold's findings were:

"1. Intensive evaluation is seemingly no more effective than moderate evaluation in improving the quality of written composition.
2. Frequent writing practice does not in itself improve writing.
3. There is no evidence that any one combination of frequency of writing and teacher evaluation is more effective than another.
4. Frequent writing and intensive evaluation are no more effective for one ability level than are infrequent writing and moderate evaluation." (p. 14)

Arnold notes, "Results of this study underscore the need for additional research in the teaching of written composition," an understatement if there ever was one.

3. In the last few years, attention has been directed to the possible value of tape-recording comments on student writing. Two articles supporting the tape recorder (and particularly the cassette recorder) have appeared in the BULLETIN OF THE KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH. Pauline Toland's "A Tape-Grading Trial" in the October 1968 issue reports an experiment at Colby Community College, Colby, Kansas, with some remedial English students. She concludes that teacher taping of evaluations and student listening to these evaluations (many times if needed or wanted) was successful. She further notes, "First, this kind of grading results in progressively better written themes. . . Second, grading on tape is not exactly a time saver for the instructor, and it takes more of the student's time . . . Third, tape grading is worth the extra time". Don Toburen in "Personal Attention to Student Writing: Finally" in the October 1969 issue lists procedures for a similar experiment, offers detailed advice on several problems (choosing the type of cassette recorder, feedback from students), and lists several "discoveries" made by the staff of Butler County Community College in running the experiment.

"1. Check the equipment carefully.
2. Introduce and conclude your comment clearly, so that the student does not have to search for the beginning or ending.
3. Be firm. Make your point clearly and positively.
4. Take a few seconds to reinforce what has been well done. Students become discouraged quickly when no positive word is heard.
5. Have the students number each line of a composition so that you may refer to a certain line or to a series of lines to clarify comments or to give examples more specifically.
6. Watch your time. When one begins using the program, he tends to 'get carried away' with the explanation, often making unnecessarily extensive or repetitive comments.
7. Reading the whole composition before beginning to make comments often saves time, for what looks like a weakness may later prove to be a strength as the student develops his ideas.
8. Encourage questions (be willing to listen to the tape with the student).
9. Save the grade until last, forcing the reluctantly interested student to listen completely through the tape to find out his grade.
10. Do not replay the tape. The temptation is great to go back and listen to what you have said. Avoid doing so, for such a practice is very time-consuming.
12. Try to limit yourself to one aspect of composition at a time.
18. Make the physical materials readily accessible.

RESEARCH IN LITERATURE

1. Steve Dunning's articles are fun to read, and his "'I Really Liked It': Short Stories and Taste" in the May 1968 ENGLISH JOURNAL, pp. 670-679 may not exactly be an experiment but it just might point the way to a number of experiments in literary taste and young people, an area little researched but much talked about. Taking off from the assumption that "improving student taste, then, should be one of the teacher's chief aims in the literature curriculum," Dunning proposes an inductive technique to involve students in a discussion of literary taste. Using S.I. Kishor's "Appointment with Love" (published originally in COLLIER'S) and John Collier's "The Chaser" (published originally in THE NEW YORKER), students contrast elements of the 2 stories and (hopefully) evolve some standards or ideas about what constitutes the nebulous quality we call "good" literature.

2. Recently, the editor witnessed a student teacher who was reluctantly using an emasculated text of ROMEO AND JULIET with a group of none-too-excited ninth graders. To pep up the class and to bring some life to an otherwise dead text, she played a recording of the play which was (1) the most stultifying recording the editor has ever heard, and (2) not keyed in to the bastardized text. The results? Confusion as students vainly tried to figure out why the recording included material not in the text and, ultimately, tittering as students gave up the play as a lost cause. Two teachers have noted the problem of the emasculated classic and have compared several editions or versions. Ruth Stein's "The A B C's of Counterfeit Classics: Adapted, Bowdlerized, and Condensed" in the December 1966 ENGLISH JOURNAL, pp. 1160-1163, discusses the changes wrought in HUCKLEBERRY FINN in style, dialogue, names of characters, and dialects and concludes, "After a careful examination of the adaptations of this novel, I must conclude that they present really only the skeletal structure of HUCKLEBERRY FINN, that the heart and soul are gone". In discussing some problems in teaching Shakespeare in high school, Margaret Ackerman ("Miss-Teaching Shakespeare," ARIZONA ENGLISH BULLETIN, May 1967, pp. 66-69) points up the mutilations of high school editions of ROMEO AND JULIET, HAMLET, JULIUS CAESAR, and MACBETH. Both articles suggest that English teachers ought to know whether the texts they use are the originals and if not, why not? Perhaps publishers, who claim to publish what English teachers want, would restore the texts if enough English teachers cared to complain. Some teachers will point out that the problem is easily alleviated if English teachers would use paperbacks, but many teachers continue to use hardback school anthologies, for whatever the reason. Though on a slightly different issue--the problem of choosing an accurate and readable translation of Homer's ODYSSEY--Peter Neumeyer's "'The Princess Gave a Shriek, and the Hero Awoke': Or, Which ODYSSEY?" ENGLISH JOURNAL, April 1967, pp. 552-560, again offers proof that English teachers can compare and evaluate texts, a kind of basic research every English teacher is supposedly equipped to do and one possibly more palatable than statistical research.

RESEARCH IN ENGLISH TEACHER PERFORMANCE

1. James Hoetker's "Teacher Questioning Behavior in Nine Junior High School English Classes" in the Fall 1968 RESEARCH IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH (pp. 99-106) represents a kind of research English teachers might find rewarding to read (true of all the research above) but more difficult to emulate (and the research above could be done by most English teachers or departments). Hoetker's sample was 9 junior high school classes in one building, 3 from each grade level (7 through 9), with one class from each ability level at each grade level. Two observers attended each of these 9 classes for 5 days, tape recording and later transcribing what went on in each class. Limiting the analysis of the data to the questioning rate of the

English teachers, Hoetker notes, "Figured on the basis of questions per hour of class, the mean rate of teacher questioning in our sample was 1.68 q/m (questions per minute), with a range from 0.71 q/m to 2.52 q/m. These rates tallied with those reported in the earlier studies, but it was felt that, since a good deal of time in each class was spent in seat work of one sort or another a more meaningful measure of teacher questioning rate would be questions per minute of teacher-pupil talk. This method of computation gave a mean rate of 3.22 q/m, with a range of from 0.94 q/m to 5.83 q/m. It was still apparent, however, that a good deal of the teacher-pupil talk had nothing to do with the subject matter of the class--announcements were made, tickets were sold, disciplinary problems were taken care of. So another computation was made of the rate of teacher questioning during periods of substantive (i.e., subject matter related) talk. . . The mean questioning rate per minute of substantive talk was 5.17 q/m, or a teacher question every 11.8 seconds --a rate at which the concern of critics about the emotional and intellectual consequences of such pedagogy becomes urgent. . . in the ninth grade, low ability class the questioning rate is 10.72 questions per minute. That is a question every 5.6 seconds, with the student response taking place within some fraction of that period." If all this seems beyond belief, read Hoetker's article and James Squire's article in support on pp. 107-108. Both raise serious questions about the pedagogy of too many time-obsessed teachers.

Back to the question of the article, "Can English teachers conduct research?" Of course they can and they do and they find things out or they try to find things out. Sometimes the research just doesn't pan out, but that can happen with any human endeavor. Until we have reached some intellectual and pedagogical millennium, about all any human being can be asked to do is to try to find some answers to some questions that disturb him. The only people exempt from this obligation are those who already have all the answers. Teachers may nobly point out that they are too busy with teaching responsibilities (the research above was done by people who must not teach since they seem to have found time) or that they are not prepared for research (too bad the research above was done by people who didn't realize their limitations) or that they haven't read enough past research to know what needs to be done (the researchers above found the time and did their library work, but aren't English teachers supposed to know how to use the library?). Those who can, do. Those who cannot, find all sorts of excuses to avoid doing.

CURRENT READING: A Scholarly and Pedagogical Bibliography of Articles and Books, Recent and Old, on Research and Experiments in English Teaching

The books and articles listed below represent only a tiny portion of the research and experiments in English teaching, but they will give the neophyte in research some idea how other people have tested an idea. Some are near models of rigorous investigation, some are not rigorous in procedures but provocative in ideas, and some are not really research at all but ideas worth researching. The reader is warned that the list is a series of personal favorites of the editor, and other English teachers would undoubtedly suggest additions or deletions.

MATERIALS ON RESEARCH IN ENGLISH--GENERAL

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SHOPTALK: A Column of Brief Ideas and Sundry Thoughts about Research and Experiments in the English Class

English teachers interested in summaries of research about English teaching should be aware of three columns in the ENGLISH JOURNAL. Tony Tovatt and Ted DeVries write monthly on "This World of English" and review provocative experiments and ideas in other journals (this is especially helpful for the various NCTE state affiliate publications who otherwise would be overlooked outside their own states). Also appearing monthly (or nearly so) are NCTE-ERIC Reports annotating many hard-to-find experiments. Finally, Nathan Blount's "Summary of Investigations Relating to the English Language Arts in Secondary Education" appears every May. Blount's column is more difficult reading than "This World of English" or NCTE-ERIC Reports, but it will give English teachers some idea of what is going on in the research about English teaching.

Interested in discovering what kinds of composition assignments high school students preferred, Patricia Standish (Alhambra HS, Phoenix) asked 256 students to complete a brief questionnaire. The response to item 1, "If you were going to be assigned a composition, which instructions would you prefer to follow?" revealed a preference for an unstructured assignment (an assignment which left the student free in choice of topic, audience, approach, style, or length) by more than 40% of the students. About 29% preferred the loosely structured assignment, while less than 13% favored highly structured assignments. Item 2 asked students, "If you were going to be assigned a composition, which type of topic would you prefer?" and students indicated preference for topics based on current problems (50%), as opposed to topics based on literature (20%), experience (12%), or the composition book (2%). Item 3 asked students, "If you were going to be assigned a composition, what type of writing would you prefer?" Students responded to item 3 by indicating a preference for expository writing (36%) over narrative (22%) or descriptive (15%) writing. That these 256 students preferred unstructured assignments is a little surprising. Many texts on writing note that structured topics give the young writer a sense of purpose and direction.

Media and its impact on students has made the scene in many English classes. Though some written materials on media are worth anyone's time (MEDIA AND METHODS--and every teacher ought to know that journal--and Edmund Farrell's ENGLISH, EDUCATION, AND THE ELECTRONICS REVOLUTION and William Kuhns and Robert Stanley's EXPLORING THE FILM and Sister Bede Sullivan's MOVIES: UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE--FILM STUDY IN HIGH SCHOOL), few teachers have really tested whether non-print media teach anything better than the usual printed matter or whether non-print media really make any significant change in the English curriculum. Writing in the March 1970 MEDIA AND METHODS, editor Frank McLaughlin notes, "There is much evidence of a media explosion in closets and on the classroom shelves of schools. There is little evidence of better teaching. . . Media usage assures nothing!" (p. 38) We need articles like David Babcock's "The Use of Motion Pictures in Teaching Slow Learners" in the New York English Council's ENGLISH RECORD (Dec. 1967). A new book, not yet seen by the editor, by David Sohn, FILMS IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (available from American Film Institute, Education Department, 1815 H Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006, $2.50 for members, $3.50 for non-members) resulted from using many short films with several hundred elementary school children and reporting their reactions and teacher suggestions for using the films in the classroom. It might serve as proof that we need to do some research in the use of media in English teaching.

The NCTE has published several research reports, all worth buying and all worth discussing in English department meetings. Particularly exciting for classroom application are James Squire's THE RESPONSES OF ADOLESCENTS WHILE READING FOUR SHORT STORIES (1964), Kellogg Hunt's GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURES WRITTEN AT THREE GRADE LEVELS (1965), Donald Bateman and Frank Zidonis' THE EFFECT OF A STUDY OF TRANSFORMATIONAL GRAMMAR ON THE WRITING OF NINTH AND TENTH GRADERS (1966), and Alan Purves and Victoria Rippere's ELEMENTS OF WRITING ABOUT A LITERARY WORK: A STUDY OF RESPONSE TO LITERATURE (1968).

In August and September 1966, leading figures in English teaching and scholarship met at Dartmouth for what proved to be an exciting conference, one that may prove the most significant in many years. NCTE publications about that meeting are not research reports, but they are provocative in their ideas and suggestions are worth researching. The two major reports, John Dixon's GROWTH THROUGH ENGLISH (NCTE, 1967) and Herbert J. Muller's THE USES OF ENGLISH (NY: Holt, 1967) are worth any English teacher's time as are the smaller reports, Paul Olson's THE USES OF MYTH (NCTE, 1968), James Squire's RESPONSE TO LITERATURE (NCTE, 1968), Albert Marckwardt's LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGE LEARNING (NCTE, 1968), and Douglas Barnes' DRAMA IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM (NCTE, 1968). Two other works, not related to the Dartmouth Conference but still worth reading, are Northrup Frye's DESIGN FOR LEARNING (Toronto: U of Toronto Press, 1962), a report of curriculum suggestions for the Toronto schools, and FREEDOM AND DISCIPLINE IN ENGLISH (NY: College Entrance Examination Board, 1965), once described as the foundation of English curriculum revision in the country and now almost a curiosity, but still worth a reader's time and attention.

A participant at the Dartmouth Conference, James Moffett, has three books stressing creative dramatics, mime, small discussion groups, and improvisation that are worth the reader's time and careful attention. A STUDENT-CENTERED LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM, GRADES K-6: A HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS, and A STUDENT-CENTERED LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM, GRADES K-13: A HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS, and TEACHING THE UNIVERSE OF DISCOURSE (all from Houghton, 1968) may be the most specific and exciting curriculum work in English to appear in some time. Little of Moffett's material has been researched, although it has been tried out in many schools, but researchers should have a field day with his ideas.

In his A B C OF READING, Ezra Pound suggested that students might enjoy and benefit from writing parodies of poetry. "Let him parody some poem he finds ridiculous, either because of falsity in the statement, or falsity in the disposition of the writer, or for pretentiousness, of one kind or another, or for any other reason that strikes his risible faculties, his sense of irony. The gauging pupil should be asked to recognize what author is parodied. And whether the joke is on the parodied or the parodist. Whether the parody exposes a real defect, or merely makes use of an author's mechanism to expose a more trivial contents. Note: No harm has ever yet been done a good poem by this process. FitzGerald's RUBAIYAT has survived hundreds of parodies, that are not really parodies either of Omar or FitzGerald, but only poems written in that form of strophe." (NY: New Directions Paperbook No. 89, 1960.) Though teachers have used parody for years, perhaps someone ought to study the value and effectiveness of it, either as writing practice or as a principle for teaching poetry. MAD MAGAZINE would be helpful as would the anthology edited by R.P. Falk, THE ANTIC MUSE: AMERICAN WRITERS IN PARODY (NY: Grove, 1955, published in hardback as AMERICAN LITERATURE IN PARODY). An excellent article in the COLLEGE ENGLISH for January 1964, William Van O'Connor's "Parody as Criticism" should prove helpful.

In the VIRGINIA ENGLISH BULLETIN for March 1970, Scott Donaldson reported that "the mythical average freshman at William and Mary is required to read three and one-quarter novels in his last two years of high school, and he reads about five and one-third novels on his own during that two-year span, for a total of about eight and one-half novels. The novels he is assigned to read are, almost always, classical 19th Century examples of the genre. Left to his own devices, Mr. or Miss Average Freshman tends, not surprisingly, to choose more modern, more controversial books". Only one novel, THE SCARLET LETTER, had been read by more than half the 493 freshmen reporting. The five most read novels were THE SCARLET LETTER, RETURN OF THE NATIVE, SILAS MARNER, THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE, and LORD OF THE FLIES. The five most popular novels were THE SCARLET LETTER, 1984, LORD OF THE FLIES, ANIMAL FARM, and CATCHER IN THE RYE.

The use of still pictures to teach composition or to motivate students to want to write is not particularly new, and at least three paperbacks are available using this approach, Hart Leavitt and David Sohn's STOP, LOOK, AND WRITE! EFFECTIVE WRITING THROUGH PICTURES (NY: Bantam, 1964), Hart Leavitt's THE WRITER'S EYE (NY: Bantam, 1968), and David Sohn's PICTURES FOR WRITING (NY: Bantam, 1969). Few articles have appeared on this topic, the two most obvious being Frank McLaughlin's "Learning to Write through Pictures," SCHOOL PAPERBACK JOURNAL, October 1965, and Jack Debes' "A New Look at Seeing," MEDIA AND METHODS, May 1968. Do students really improve their writing through the use of pictures? If we had some evidence, more teachers might be convinced of the worth of this relatively new method.

Though general semantics has been around for a long time, few teachers have tested whether students show any demonstrable growth in clear thinking or in clarity in writing or speech through training in general semantics. At least two texts should be worth considering, if not for class use at least for teacher reading. The first is aimed at junior high school, Catherine Mintneer's WORDS AND WHAT THEY DO TO YOU (Lakeville, Conn.: Institute of General Semantics, 1953), and the second is a high school text (possibly now out-of-print) with excellent suggestions for student activities, Cleveland A. Thomas' LANGUAGE POWER FOR YOUTH (NY: Appleton, 1955).

English teachers depressed with the seriousness of much research in literary criticism should read Frederick C. Crews' THE POOH PERPLEX: A FRESHMAN CASEBOOK (NY: Dutton, 1963), a funny and biting set of parodies of various schools of criticism, from the Marxist to the Aristotelian to the Historical to the Archetypal. Those depressed with statistical research might look at Jack Thomas Leahy's "Objective Correlation and the Grading of English Composition" in COLLEGE ENGLISH, October 1963, pp. 35-38, a delightful spoof of formulas and meaningless jargon. Finally, A STRESS ANALYSIS OF A STRAPLESS EVENING GOWN (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor, 1963) should be a joy to anyone who enjoys humor, in this case scientists taking pot-shots at certain kinds of scientific writing.

Billy G. Collins and Duane Nichols (Kansas State U) take a poke at the value of the outline as an aid to writing in their "The Great Outline Myth: A Sacred Totem in Search of an Ax," THE ENGLISH RECORD (NY State English Council), December 1969, pp. 40-49. Attacking the dogmatism of too many textbook authors, the authors argue that "it is impossible to write an outline in advance and to write an accurate, honest essay according to the dictates of the plan. Remember that essay derives from the French essayer, meaning 'to try'. An effective essay is, beyond the sheer propaganda level, a serious attempt to work out the answer to a problem--to try to solve it or to record one's reaction to it. Regardless of the seriousness of the writing occasion, an essay is a confrontation of a tentative solution and its causative problem. The frightening thing about such writing is that a writer too often is forced to change his mind about the problem and its solution in mid-essay". Do we really know enough about the worth of outlines (for the writer, for the student, for the teacher) to make it worth teaching? Do we know anything for sure about the value of the outline to anybody?

Fear of or resentment toward writing in ASU freshmen was explored in an unpublished paper by Gail Briscoe (ASU Teaching Assistant). A sample of 130 students were asked to describe what they feared or resented in writing (or why they had no fear or resentment). Cited were 31 reasons for fear or resentment, the most common reason being "fear of poor grades". Other reasons given were the fear of "being compared with other students," "resentment against having their papers marked up," "fear of the assignment or the dullness of the assignment," "fear of grammar," "fear of all those mechanical errors," "fear of their own inability to write," "resentment of the pressure of time to get papers written". A high school teacher, Rose Duarte (McClintock HS, Tempe) surveyed other English teachers to discover what fears they had in their own writing, and then had these teachers grade a sample HS composition. She found that some teachers who said they feared writing graded the student composition in such a way as to make any student fear writing (no comments, comments on mechanics and nothing else, ambiguous comments).

Any English teacher interested in research should be aware of ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center), particularly the NCTE-ERIC which handles, summarizes, and disseminates information about experiments and research in English teaching. ERIC DOCUMENTS ON THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH 1956-1968 and ERIC DOCUMENTS ON THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH JANUARY-JUNE 1969 and ERIC DOCUMENTS ON THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH JULY-DECEMBER 1969 list the work that has been done in dramatics and linguistics and other facets of English teaching. Other materials available from NCTE-ERIC include state of the arts papers on DRAMATICS AND THE TEACHING OF LITERATURE (James Hoetker), TEACHER PREPARATION IN COMPOSITION (Eugene Smith), THE TEACHING OF LITERATURE IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (Norine Odland), and the soon-to-be-released CREATIVITY IN THE ENGLISH PROGRAM (Rodney Smith). NCTE-ERIC also offers free bibliographies (some annotated) in such areas as Creative Writing, Discussion and Informal Talk, Dramatic Arts, History of the English Language, Teaching Vocabulary, Censorship, and Media Study. Virtually everything NCTE-ERIC has published should be in the library or file of every English department.

Behavioral objectives and all they represent to English teachers are discussed in 2 articles in the March 1970 MEDIA AND METHODS. Ed Cohen's "If You're Not Sure Where You're Going, You're Liable to End up Someplace Else" supports the cause, Robert Hogan's "On Hunting and Fishing and Behaviorism" suggests some reasons for caution, but both deserve the attention of English teachers titillated or threatened or besieged by supervisors or evaluators pleading or requesting or demanding objectives written in behavioral terms. Resolution 9 presented and passed at the 1969 NCTE meeting in Washington, D.C. urged a go-slow policy on behavioral objectives and resolved, "That those who propose to employ behavioral objectives be urged to engage in a careful appraisal of the possible benefits and the present limitations of behavioral definitions of English with reference to the humanistic aims which have traditionally been valued in this discipline". Perhaps it's time English teachers in the classrooms got involved in this "careful appraisal," which would mean that English teachers would have to investigate the theoretical underpinnings, the construction, the values, and the dangers or limitations of behavioral objectives. It makes little sense to argue against them (or anything) out of pure ignorance. To attack something effectively, you first have to understand it, and the search for understanding might just possibly lead to knowledge and some tolerance, if not acceptance.

One of the most intriguing experiments of the last few years opens with these words, "People, more often than not, do what is expected of them. Much of our behavior is governed by widely shared norms or expectations that make it possible to prophesy how a person will behave in a given situation, even if we have never met that person and know little of how he differs from others. . . Our prediction or prophesy may in itself be a factor in determining the behavior of other people". Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson's PYGMALION IN THE CLASSROOM (NY: Holt, 1968) then details an imaginative attack on the self-fulfilling prophecy that dooms many deprived children. The authors administered a standard nonverbal intelligence test to all the children in one elementary school. Teachers were told that the test would predict intellectual blooming or spurting, and they were given names of students who, from the test scores, would show dramatic intellectual growth. Although actually chosen randomly, these "intellectually promising" youngsters did bloom because the teachers expected them to, especially in the first two grades. "The advantage of having been expected to bloom was evident for these younger children in total IQ, verbal IQ, and reasoning IQ." (p. 176) Does tracking help students to learn, or help keep them in their place?